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*The Lady of Shalott*  
By J. W. Waterhouse, R. A.

THE HARVARD CLASSICS  
EDITED BY CHARLES W ELIOT LL D



# ENGLISH POETRY

VOLUME III

FROM TENNYSON TO WHITMAN

WITH INTRODUCTIONS, NOTES  
AND ILLUSTRATIONS



"DR ELIOT'S FIVE-FOOT SHELF OF BOOKS"

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# ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

[1809-1892]

624

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT

### PART I

ON either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
And thro' the field the road runs by  
To many-tower'd Camelot;  
And up and down the people go,  
Gazing where the lilies blow  
Round an island there below,  
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river  
Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle imbowers  
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
By slow horses; and unhail'd  
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd  
Skimming down to Camelot:  
But who hath seen her wave her hand?  
Or at the casement seen her stand?  
Or is she known in all the land,  
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early  
In among the bearded barley,  
Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
From the river winding clearly,  
    Down to tower'd Camelot:  
And by the moon the reaper weary,  
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
Listening, whispers 'Tis the fairy  
    Lady of Shalott.'

## PART II

There she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colours gay.  
She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay  
    To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she,  
    The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year,  
Shadows of the world appear.  
There she sees the highway near  
    Winding down to Camelot:  
There the river eddy whirls,  
And there the surly village-churls,  
And the red cloaks of market girls,  
    Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot on an ambling pad,  
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
    Goes by to tower'd Camelot;

And sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
The knights come riding two and two:  
She hath no loyal knight and true,  
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
For often thro' the silent nights  
A funeral, with plumes and lights,  
And music, went to Camelot:  
Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed;  
'I am half sick of shadows,' said  
The Lady of Shalott.

## PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,  
He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
To a lady in his shield,  
That sparkled on the yellow field,  
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,  
Like to some branch of stars we see  
Hung in the golden Galaxy.  
The bridle bells rang merrily  
As he rode down to Camelot:  
And from his blazon'd baldric slung  
A mighty silver bugle hung,  
And as he rode his armour rung,  
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,

The helmet and the helmet-feather  
Burn'd like one burning flame together,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
As often thro' the purple night,  
Below the starry clusters bright,  
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;  
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;  
From underneath his helmet flow'd  
His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
From the bank and from the river  
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,  
'Tirra lirra,' by the river  
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
She made three paces thro' the room,  
She saw the water-lily bloom,  
She saw the helmet and the plume,  
She look'd down to Camelot.  
Out flew the web and floated wide;  
The mirror crack'd from side to side;  
'The curse is come upon me!' cried  
The Lady of Shalott.

#### PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,  
The pale yellow woods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks complaining,  
Heavily the low sky raining  
Over tower'd Camelot;  
Down she came and found a boat  
Beneath a willow left afloat,  
And round about the prow she wrote  
*The Lady of Shalott.*



And down the river's dim expanse—  
Like some bold seer in a trance,  
Seeing all his own mischance—  
With a glassy countenance  
    Did she look to Camelot.  
And at the closing of the day  
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;  
The broad stream bore her far away,  
    The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
That loosely flew to left and right—  
The leaves upon her falling light—  
Thro' the noises of the night  
    She floated down to Camelot:  
And as the boat-head wound along  
The willowy hills and fields among,  
They heard her singing her last song,  
    The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
And her eyes were darkened wholly,  
    Turn'd to tower'd Camelot;  
For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
The first house by the water-side,  
Singing in her song she died,  
    The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
By garden-wall and gallery,  
A gleaming shape she floated by,  
Dead-pale between the houses high,  
    Silent into Camelot.  
Out upon the wharfs they came,  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
And round the prow they read her name,  
    *The Lady of Shalott.*

Who is this? and what is here?  
 And in the lighted palace near  
 Died the sound of royal cheer;  
 And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
     All the knights at Camelot:  
 But Lancelot mused a little space;  
 He said, 'She has a lovely face;  
 God in His mercy lend her grace,  
     The Lady of Shalott.'

SWEET and low, sweet and low,  
     Wind of the western sea,  
 Low, low, breathe and blow,  
     Wind of the western sea!  
 Over the rolling waters go,  
 Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
     Blow him again to me;  
 While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
     Father will come to thee soon;  
 Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
     Father will come to thee soon;  
 Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
 Silver sails all out of the west  
     Under the silver moon:  
 Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what they mean,  
 Tears from the depth of some divine despair  
 Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,  
 In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,  
 And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,  
That brings our friends up from the underworld,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned  
On lips that are for others; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

627

## BLOW, BUGLE BLOW

THE splendour falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story:  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going!  
O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river:  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

## 628 HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD

HOME they brought her warrior dead:  
She nor swooned, nor uttered cry:  
All her maidens, watching, said,  
‘She must weep or she will die.’

Then they praised him, soft and low,  
Called him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend and noblest foe;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stepped,  
Took the face-cloth from the face;  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee—  
Like summer tempest came her tears—  
‘Sweet my child, I live for thee.’

## 629 NOW SLEEPS THE CRIMSON PETAL

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;  
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;  
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font:  
The fire-fly wakens: waken thou with me.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a ghost,  
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars,  
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves  
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,  
And slips into the bosom of the lake:  
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip  
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

630

## O SWALLOW, SWALLOW

O SWALLOW, Swallow, flying, flying South,  
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,  
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,  
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,  
And dark and true and tender is the North.

O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light  
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,  
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

O were I thou that she might take me in,  
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart  
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,  
Delaying as the tender ash delays  
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown:  
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,  
But in the North long since my nest is made.

O tell her, brief is life but love is long,  
And brief the sun of summer in the North,  
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,  
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,  
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.

631

## BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

BREAK, break, break,  
On thy cold grey stones, O Sea!  
And I would that my tongue could utter  
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,  
That he shouts with his sister at play!  
O well for the sailor lad,  
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill;  
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!  
But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
Will never come back to me.

632

## IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ

ALL along the valley, stream that flashest white,  
Deepening thy voice with the deepening of the night,  
All along the valley, where thy waters flow,  
I walked with one I loved two and thirty years ago.  
All along the valley while I walked to-day,  
The two and thirty years were a mist that rolls away;  
For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed,  
Thy living voice to me was as the voice of the dead,  
And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree,  
The voice of the dead was a living voice to me.

633

## VIVIEN'S SONG

'IN Love, if Love be Love, if Love be ours,  
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers:  
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.



'It is the little rift within the lute,  
That by and by will make the music mute,  
And ever widening slowly silence all.

'The little rift within the lover's lute  
Or little pitted speck in garnered fruit,  
That rotting inward slowly moulders all.

'It is not worth the keeping: let it go:  
But shall it? answer, darling, answer, no.  
And trust me not at all or all in all.'

## 634

## ENID'S SONG

TURN, Fortune, turn thy wheel, and lower the proud;  
Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine, storm, and cloud;  
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown;  
With that wild wheel we go not up or down;  
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.

Smile and we smile, the lords of many lands;  
Frown and we smile, the lords of our own hands;  
For man is man and master of his fate.

Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring crowd;  
Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the cloud;  
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

## 635

## ULYSSES

IT little profits that an idle king,  
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,  
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole  
Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
That hoard and sleep, and feed, and know not me.

I cannot rest from travel: I will drink  
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd  
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those  
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when  
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades  
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;  
For always roaming with a hungry heart  
Much have I seen and known; cities of men  
And manners, climates, councils, governments,  
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;  
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,  
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.  
I am a part of all that I have met;  
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'  
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades  
For ever and for ever when I move.  
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!  
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life  
Were all too little, and of one to me  
Little remains: but every hour is saved  
From that eternal silence, something more,  
A bringer of new things; and vile it were  
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,  
And this gray spirit yearning in desire  
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,  
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—  
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil  
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild  
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees  
Subdue them to the useful and the good.  
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere  
Of common duties, decent not to fail  
In offices of tenderness, and pay  
Meet adoration to my household gods,  
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:  
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,

Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with  
me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took  
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed  
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;  
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;  
Death closes all: but something ere the end,  
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,  
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.  
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:  
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep  
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,  
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.  
Push off, and sitting well in order smite  
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds  
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
Of all the western stars until I die.  
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:  
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,  
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.  
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'  
We are not now that strength which in old days  
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;  
One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

636

## LOCKSLEY HALL

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early  
morn:

Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the  
bugle horn.

'Tis the place, and ail around it, as of old, the curlews call,  
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy  
tracts,

And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to  
rest,  
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow  
shade,  
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sub-  
lime  
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;  
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it  
closed:

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see;  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would  
be.—

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;  
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove;  
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts  
of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one  
so young,  
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance  
hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth  
to me,  
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a colour and a light,  
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of  
sighs—  
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do  
me wrong;"

Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have  
loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing  
hands;

Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords  
with might;

Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music  
out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses  
ring,

And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fullness of  
the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately  
ships,

And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Any, mine no more!  
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have  
sung,

Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish  
tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy? having known me—to decline  
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day by day,  
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with  
clay.

As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated with a clown,  
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag  
thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its  
novel force,  
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they are glazed  
with wine.  
Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is over-wrought:  
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter  
thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—  
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with  
my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's dis-  
grace,  
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength  
of youth!  
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's  
rule!  
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of  
the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less un-  
worthy proved—  
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife  
was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter  
fruit?  
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years  
should come

As the many winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery  
home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?

Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her,  
kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and  
move:

Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she  
bore?

No—she never loved me truly: love is love for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is truth the poet  
sings,

That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier  
things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put  
to proof,

In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the  
roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the  
wall,

Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise  
and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken  
sleep,

To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou  
wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whisper'd by the phan-  
tom years,

And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine  
ears;



And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on  
thy pain.

Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest  
again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice  
will cry.

'Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival brings thee  
rest.

Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's  
breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his  
due.

Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,  
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's  
heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was  
not exempt—

Truly, she herself had suffer'd"—Perish in thy self-con-  
tempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore should I care?  
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like  
these?

Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.  
I have but an angry fancy: what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,  
When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the winds are laid  
with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honour  
feels,  
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's  
heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.  
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-  
Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,  
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my  
life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years  
would yield,  
Eager hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's  
field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer  
drawn,  
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary  
dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,  
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of  
men:

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something  
new:  
That which they have done but earnest of the things that  
they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would  
be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly  
bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a  
ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue ;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing  
warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-  
storm ;

Till the war-drum throb'd no longer, and the battle-flags  
were furl'd  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm  
in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me  
dry,  
Left me with a palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced  
eye ;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of  
joint,  
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point  
to point :

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher,  
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of  
the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful  
joys,  
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's ?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the  
shore,  
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden  
breast,  
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his  
rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-  
horn,  
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their  
scorn:

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd  
string?  
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a  
thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's pleasure,  
woman's pain—  
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower  
brain:

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with  
mine,  
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some  
retreat  
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd;  
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,  
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,  
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Para-  
dise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag.  
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer  
from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited  
tree—

Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march  
of mind,

In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake  
mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and  
breathing-space;

I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky  
race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall  
run,

Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the  
sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the  
brooks,

Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know* my words are  
wild,

But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian  
child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious  
gains,

Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower  
pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime?  
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,  
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in  
Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us  
range.

Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves  
of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger  
day:

Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life  
began:

Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh  
the Sun—

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.  
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall!  
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree  
fall.

Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath and  
holt,

Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or  
snow;

For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd  
Among the mountains by the winter sea;  
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,  
Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their Lord,  
King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,  
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,  
Sir Bedivere the last of all his knights,  
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,

A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.  
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one  
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:  
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights  
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep  
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we  
Shall never more, at any future time,  
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,  
Walking about the gardens and the halls  
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.  
I perish by this people which I made,—  
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again  
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,  
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm  
That without help I cannot last till morn.  
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,  
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how  
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm  
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,  
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across  
And took it, and have worn it, like a king:  
And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known:  
But now delay not: take Excalibur,  
And fling him far into the middle mere:  
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:  
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,  
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.  
A little thing may harm a wounded man.  
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,  
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept  
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,  
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,  
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang



Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down  
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,  
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,  
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,  
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth  
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:  
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,  
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work  
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long  
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,  
This way and that dividing the swift mind,  
In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd  
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd  
There in the many-knotted waterflags,  
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.  
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:  
"Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?  
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:  
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds  
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, f'rent and pale:  
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,  
Not rendering true answer, as besem'd  
Thy fæalty, nor like a noble knight:  
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,  
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.  
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.  
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again  
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing  
I bad thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time  
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,  
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought;  
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,  
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote  
His palms together, and he cried aloud,

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,

Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,  
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,  
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.  
What good should follow this, if this were done?  
What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,  
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.  
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand  
An act unprofitable, against himself?  
The king is sick, and knows not what he does.  
What record, or what relic of my lord  
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath  
And rumours of a doubt? but were this kept,  
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,  
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,  
Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,  
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.  
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps  
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."

So might some old man speak in the aftertime  
To all the people, winning reverence.

But now much honour and much fame were lost.

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,  
And hid Excalibur the second time,  
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:  
"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

"I heard the water lapping on the crag,  
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,  
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!

Authority forgets a dying king,  
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye  
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,  
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,  
In whom should meet the offices of all,  
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;  
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl  
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,  
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence  
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,  
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,  
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged  
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,  
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand  
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,  
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,  
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,  
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock  
By night, with noises of the northern sea.  
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:  
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,  
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him  
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.  
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:  
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.  
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:  
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems  
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,  
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,  
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,  
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.  
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;  
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,  
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him  
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:  
"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.  
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,  
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear  
My wound hath taken cold; and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,  
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,

And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes  
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere  
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,  
And would have spoken, but he found not words,  
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,  
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands  
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,  
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed  
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,  
Muttering and murmuring at his ear "Quick, quick!  
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."  
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,  
Clothed with his breath, and looking as he walk'd,  
Larger than human on the frozen hills.  
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry  
Before. His own thought drove him, like a goad.  
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves  
And barren chasms, and all to left and right  
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based  
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang  
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—  
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,  
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,  
Beneath them; and descending they were ware  
That all the decks were dense with stately forms  
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these  
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them  
rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,  
And, as it were one voice, an agony,  
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills  
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,  
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge,"  
And to the barge they came. There those three  
Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them all  
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,  
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,  
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,  
And dropping bitter tears against his brow  
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white  
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon  
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;  
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops  
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—  
That made his forehead like a rising sun  
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust;  
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,  
Mixed with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.  
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;  
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,  
From spur to plume a star of tournament,  
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,  
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?  
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?  
For now I see the true old times are dead,  
When every morning brought a noble chance,  
And every chance brought out a noble knight.  
Such times have been not since the light that led  
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved  
Which was an image of the mighty world;  
And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
And the days darken round me and the years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge:  
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.  
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I have done  
May He within Himself make pure! but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face again,

Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.  
But now farewell. I am going a long way  
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—  
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)  
To the island-valley of Avilion;  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies  
Deep-meadow'd happy, fair with orchard-lawns  
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,  
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail  
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan  
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood  
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere  
Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,  
And on the mere the wailing died away.

"COURAGE!" he said, and pointed toward the land,  
"This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon."  
In the afternoon they came unto a land  
In which it seemed always afternoon.  
All round the coast the languid air did swoon,  
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.  
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;  
And, like a downward smoke, the slender stream  
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,  
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;  
And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,  
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.  
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow  
From the inner land; far off, three mountain-tops,  
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,  
Stood sunset-flush'd; and, dew'd with showery drops,  
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown  
In the red West; thro' mountain clefts the dale  
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down  
Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale  
And meadow, set with slender galingale;  
A land where all things always seem'd the same!  
And round about the keel with faces pale,  
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,  
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,  
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave  
To each, but whoso did receive of them  
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave  
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave  
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,  
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;  
And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,  
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,  
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;  
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,  
Of child, and wife and slave; but evermore  
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,  
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.  
Then some one said, "We will return no more;"  
And all at once they sang, "Our island home  
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam"



## CHORIC SONG

## I

There is sweet music here that softer falls  
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,  
Or night-dews on still waters between walls  
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;  
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,  
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;  
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.  
Here are cool mosses deep,  
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,  
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,  
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

## II

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,  
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,  
While all things else have rest from weariness?  
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,  
We only toil, who are the first of things,  
And make perpetual moan,  
Still from one sorrow to another thrown;  
Nor ever fold our wings,  
And cease from wanderings,  
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;  
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,  
"There is no joy but calm!"—  
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

## III

Lo! in the middle of the wood,  
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud  
With winds upon the branch, and there  
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,  
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow

Falls, and floats adown the air.  
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,  
The full juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,  
Drops in a silent autumn night.  
All its allotted length of days  
The flower ripens in its place,  
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,  
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

## IV

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,  
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.  
Death is the end of life; ah, why  
Should life all labor be?  
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,  
And in a little while our lips are dumb.  
Let us alone. What is it that will last?  
All things are taken from us, and become  
Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.  
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have  
To war with evil? Is there any peace  
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?  
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave  
In silence—ripen, fall, and cease:  
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease.

## V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,  
With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
Falling asleep in a half-dream!  
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,  
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;  
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;  
Eating the Lotus day by day,  
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,  
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;  
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;

To muse and brood and live again in memory,  
With those old faces of our infancy  
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,  
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!

## VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,  
And dear the last embraces of our wives  
And their warm tears; but all hath suffer'd change;  
For surely now our household hearths are cold,  
Our sons inherit us, our looks are strange,  
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.  
Or else the island princes over-bold  
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings  
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,  
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.  
Is there confusion in the little isle?  
Let what is broken so remain.  
The Gods are hard to reconcile;  
'Tis hard to settle order once again.  
There *is* confusion worse than death,  
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,  
Long labor unto aged breath,  
Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars  
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

## VII

But, propped on beds of amaranth and moly,  
How sweet—while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly—  
With half-dropped eyelid still,  
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,  
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly  
His waters from the purple hill—  
To hear the dewy echoes calling  
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine—  
To watch the emerald-color'd water falling  
Thro' many a woven acanthus-wreath divine!  
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,  
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine.

## VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak,  
The Lotos blows by every winding creek;  
All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone;  
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone  
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-dust is  
blown.

We have had enough of action, and of motion we,  
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was  
seething free,  
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains  
in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind.  
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined  
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.  
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd  
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly  
curl'd

Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming  
world;

Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,  
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps  
and fiery sands,

Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and  
praying hands.

But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song  
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,  
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong;  
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,  
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,  
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil;  
Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd—  
down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,  
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.  
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore  
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and  
oar;

O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

639

## YOU ASK ME, WHY

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,  
Within this region I subsist,  
Whose spirits falter in the mist,  
And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,  
That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
The land, where girt with friends or foes  
A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,  
A land of just and old renown,  
Where Freedom slowly broadens down  
From precedent to precedent;

Where faction seldom gathers head,  
But, by degrees to fullness wrought,  
The strength of some diffusive thought  
Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute  
Opinions, and induce a time  
When single thought is civil crime,  
And individual freedom mute,

Tho' power should make from land to land  
The name of Britain trebly great—  
Tho' every channel of the State  
Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbor-mouth,  
Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,  
And I will see before I die  
The palms and temples of the South.

640

## LOVE THOU THY LAND

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought  
From out the storied past, and used  
Within the present, but transfused  
Thro' future time by power of thought;

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,  
Love, that endures not sordid ends,  
For English natures, freemen, friends,  
Thy brothers, and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,  
Nor feed with crude imaginings  
The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings  
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might  
To weakness, neither hide the ray  
From those, not blind, who wait for day,  
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds;  
But let her herald, Reverence, fly  
Before her to whatever sky  
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years:  
Cut Prejudice against the grain.  
But gentle words are always gain;  
Regard the weakness of thy peers.

Nor toil for title, place, or touch  
Of pension, neither count on praise—  
It grows to guerdon after-days.  
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch;

Not clinging to some ancient saw,  
Not master'd by some modern term,  
Not swift nor slow to change, but firm;  
And in its season bring the law,

That from Discussion's lip may fall  
With Life that, working strongly, binds—  
Set in all lights by many minds,  
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,  
And moist and dry, devising long,  
Thro' many agents making strong,  
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control  
Our being, lest we rust in ease.  
We all are changed by still degrees,  
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free  
To ingroove itself with that which flies,  
And work, a joint of state, that plies  
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying hard to shape in act;  
For all the past of Time reveals  
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Even now we hear with inward strife  
A motion toiling in the gloom—  
The Spirit of the years to come  
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits  
Completion in a painful school;  
Phantoms of other forms of rule,  
New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,  
But vague in vapor, hard to mark;  
And round them sea and air are dark  
With great contrivances of Power.



Of many changes, aptly join'd,  
Is bodied forth the second whole.  
Regard gradation, lest the soul  
Of Discord race the rising wind;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,  
And heap their ashes on the head;  
To shame the boast so often made,  
That we are wiser than our sires.

O, yet, if Nature's evil star  
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,  
To follow flying steps of Truth  
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,  
Must ever shock, like armed foes,  
And this be true, till Time shall close  
That Principles are rain'd in blood;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease  
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,  
But with his hand against the hilt,  
Would pace the troubled land, like Peace;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,  
Would serve his kind in deed and word,  
Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,  
That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of love that broke  
From either side, nor veil his eyes;  
And if some dreadful need should rise  
Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke.

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,  
As we bear blossom of the dead;  
Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed  
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

My good blade carves the casques of men,  
My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
My strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because my heart is pure.  
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,  
The hard brands shiver on the steel,  
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,  
The horse and rider reel;  
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
And when the tide of combat stands,  
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,  
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
On whom their favors fall!  
For them I battle till the end,  
To save from shame and thrall;  
But all my heart is drawn above,  
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine;  
I never felt the kiss of love,  
Nor maiden's hand in mine.  
More bounteous aspects on me beam,  
Me mightier transports move and thrill;  
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer  
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,  
A light before me swims,  
Between dark stems the forest glows,  
I hear a noise of hymns.  
Then by some secret shrine I ride;  
I hear a voice, but none are there;  
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,  
The tapers burning fair.  
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,  
The silver vessels sparkle clean,  
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,  
And solemn chants resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres  
I find a magic bark.  
I leap on board; no helmsman steers;  
I float till all is dark.  
A gentle sound, an awful light!  
Three angels bear the Holy Grail;  
With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
On sleeping wings they sail.  
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!  
My spirit beats her mortal bars,  
As down dark tides the glory slides,  
And starlike mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne  
Thro' dreaming towns I go,  
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,  
The streets are dumb with snow.  
The tempest crackles on the leads,  
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;  
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,  
And gilds the driving hail.  
I leave the plain, I climb the height;  
No branchy thicket shelter yields;  
But blessed forms in whistling storms  
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given  
Such hope, I know not fear;  
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven  
That often meet me here.  
I muse on joy that will not cease,  
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,  
Pure lilies of eternal peace,  
Whose odors haunt my dreams;  
And, stricken by an angel's hand,  
This mortal armor that I wear,  
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,  
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,  
 And thro' the mountain-walls  
 A rolling organ-harmony  
 Swells up and shakes and falls.  
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,  
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear:  
 "O just and faithful knight of God!  
 Ride on! the prize is near."  
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;  
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,  
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,  
 Until I find the Holy Grail.

642

## THE HIGHER PANTHEISM

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the  
 plains,—  
 Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him, who reigns?

Is not the Vision He, tho' He be not that which He seems?  
 Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in  
 dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,  
 Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?

Dark is the world to thee; thyself art the reason why,  
 For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel "I am I"?

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou fulfillest thy doom,  
 Making Him broken gleams and a stifled splendor and  
 gloom.

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit  
 can meet—  
 Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and  
 feet.

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,  
 For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.

Law is God, say some; no God at all, says the fool,  
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in  
a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot  
see;  
But if we could see and hear, this Vision——were it not He?

643

## FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL

FLOWER in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies,  
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower—but *if* I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is.

644

## WAGES

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,  
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea—  
Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong—  
Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no lover of glory she;  
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be.

The wages of sin is death: if the wages of Virtue be dust,  
Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm  
and the fly?

She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,  
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky;  
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

645

## THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

HALF a league, half a league,  
Half a league onward,  
All in the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

“Forward the Light Brigade!  
Charge for the guns!” he said.  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

“Forward, the Light Brigade!”  
Was there a man dismay’d?  
Not tho’ the soldier knew  
Some one had blunder’d.  
Theirs not to make reply,  
Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do and die.  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon in front of them  
Volley’d and thunder’d;  
Storm’d at with shot and shell,  
Boldly they rode and well,  
Into the jaws of Death,  
Into the mouth of hell  
Rode the six hundred.

Flash’d all their sabres bare,  
Flash’d as they turn’d in air  
Sabring the gunners there,  
Charging an army, while  
All the world wonder’d.  
Plunged in the battery-smoke  
Right thro’ the line they broke;  
Cossack and Russian  
Reel’d from the sabre-stroke  
Shatter’d and sunder’d.  
Then they rode back, but not,  
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,

Cannon behind them  
Volley'd and thunder'd;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
While horse and hero fell,  
They that had fought so well  
Came thro' the jaws of Death,  
Back from the mouth of hell,  
All that was left of them,  
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?  
O the wild charge they made!  
All the world wonder'd.  
Honor the charge they made!  
Honor the Light Brigade,  
Noble six hundred!

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## THE REVENGE

*A Ballad of the Fleet*

## I

AT Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,  
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came flying from far  
away;  
"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-three!"  
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: "'Fore God I am no  
coward;  
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,  
And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow quick.  
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-three?"

## II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I know you are no  
coward;  
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.  
But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.  
I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord  
Howard,  
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain."



## III

So Lord Howard past away with five ships of war that day,  
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven;  
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the  
land

Very carefully and slow,  
Men of Bideford in Devon,  
And we laid them on the ballast down below:  
For we brought them all aboard,  
And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left  
to Spain,  
To the thumb-screw and the stake, for the glory of the  
Lord.

## IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight  
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in  
sight,

With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.

"Shall we fight or shall we fly?"

Good Sir Richard, tell us now,

For to fight is but to die!

There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set."

And Sir Richard said again: "We be all good English  
men.

Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,  
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or devil yet."

## V

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roar'd a hurrah,  
and so

The little Revenge ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,  
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick  
below;

For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were  
seen,

And the little Revenge ran on thro' the long sea-lane  
between.

## VI

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from their decks  
and laugh'd,  
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little  
craft  
Running on and on, till delay'd  
By their mountain-like San Philip that, of fifteen hundred  
tons,  
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers  
of guns,  
Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

## VII

And while now the great San Philip hung above us like a  
cloud  
Whence the thunderbolt will fall  
Long and loud,  
Four galleons drew away  
From the Spanish fleet that day,  
And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,  
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

## VIII

But anon the great San Philip, she bethought herself and  
went,  
Having that within her womb that had left her ill content;  
And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand  
to hand,  
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musque-  
teers,  
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes  
his ears  
When he leaps from the water to the land.

## IX

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the  
summer sea,  
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the  
fifty-three.  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built  
galleons came,  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-  
thunder and flame;  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her  
dead and her shame.  
For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so could  
fight us no more—  
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world  
before?

## X

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"  
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;  
And it chanced that, when half of the short summer night  
was gone,  
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the deck,  
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,  
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the  
head,  
And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

## XI

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far over  
the summer sea,  
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us all  
in a ring;  
But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that we  
still could sting,  
So they watch'd what the end would be.  
And we had not fought them in vain,  
But in perilous plight were we,  
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,

And half of the rest of us maim'd for life  
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;  
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them  
stark and cold,  
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder was  
all of it spent;  
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side;  
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride:  
"We have fought such a fight for a day and a night  
As may never be fought again!  
We have won great glory, my men!  
And a day less or more  
At sea or ashore,  
We die—does it matter when?  
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in  
twain!  
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!"

## XII

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the seamen made reply:  
"We have children, we have wives,  
And the Lord hath spared our lives.  
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go;  
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow."  
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

## XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,  
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught  
at last,  
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign  
grace;  
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:  
"I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man  
and true;  
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do.  
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!"  
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

## XIV

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant  
and true,  
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap  
That he dared her with one little ship and his English few;  
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,  
But they sank his body with honor down into the deep.  
And they mann'd the Revenge with a swarthier alien crew,  
And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her own;  
When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from  
sleep,  
And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,  
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,  
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake  
grew,  
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts  
and their flags,  
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shatter'd  
navy of Spain,  
And the little Revenge herself went down by the island  
crags  
To be lost evermore in the main.

647

RIZPAH

17—

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea—  
And Willy's voice in the wind, "O mother, come out to  
me!"  
Why should he call me to-night, when he knows that I can-  
not go?  
For the downs are as bright as day, and the full moon  
stares at the snow.  
  
We should be seen, my dear; they would spy us out of the  
town.  
The loud black nights for us, and the storm rushing over  
the down,

When I cannot see my own hand, but am led by the creak  
of the chain,  
And grovel and grope for my son till I find myself drenched  
with the rain.

Anything fallen again? nay—what was there left to fall?  
I have taken them home, I have number'd the bones, I have  
hidden them all.  
What am I saying? and what are *you*? do you come as a spy?  
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree falls so must  
it lie.

Who let her in? how long has she been? you—what have  
you heard?  
Why did you sit so quiet? you never have spoken a word.  
O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none of their spies—  
But the night has crept into my heart, and begun to darken  
my eyes.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what should *you* know of  
the night,  
The blast and the burning shame and the bitter frost and  
the fright?  
I have done it, while you were asleep—you were only made  
for the day.  
I have gather'd my baby together—and now you may go  
your way.

Nay—for it 's kind of you, madam, to sit by an old dying  
wife.  
But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only an hour of life.  
I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he went out to die.  
“They dared me to do it,” he said, and he never has  
told me a lie.

I whipped him for robbing an orchard once when he was  
but a child—  
“The farmer dared me to do it,” he said; he was always  
so wild—

And idle—and could n't be idle—my Willy—he never  
could rest.

The King should have made him a soldier, he would have  
been one of his best.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and they never would  
let him be good;

They swore that he dare not rob the mail, and he swore  
that he would;

And he took no life, but he took one purse, and when all  
was done

He flung it among his fellows—"I'll none of it," said my  
son.

I came into court to the judge and the lawyers. I told  
them my tale,

God's own truth—but they kill'd him, they kill'd him for  
robbing the mail.

They hang'd him in chains for a show—we had always borne  
a good name—

To be hang'd for a thief—and then put away—is n't that  
enough shame?

Dust to dust—low down—let us hide! but they set him  
so high

That all the ships of the world could stare at him, pass-  
ing by.

God 'll pardon the hell-black raven and horrible fowls of  
the air,

But not the black heart of the lawyer who kill'd him and  
hang'd him there.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid him my last  
good-bye;

They had fasten'd the door of his cell. "O mother!" I  
heard him cry.

I could n't get back tho' I tried, he had something further  
to say,

And now I never shall know it. The jailer forced me away.



Then since I could n't but hear that cry of my boy that  
was dead,  
They seized me and shut me up: they fasten'd me down  
on my bed.  
"Mother, O mother!"—he call'd in the dark to me year  
after year—  
They beat me for that, they beat me—you know that I  
could n't but hear;  
And then at the last they found I had grown so stupid  
and still  
They let me abroad again—but the creatures had worked  
their will.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my bone was left—  
I stole them all from the lawyers—and you, will you call it  
a theft?—  
My baby, the bones that had suck'd me, the bones that had  
laughed and had cried—  
Theirs? O, no! they are mine—not theirs—they had moved  
in my side.

Do you think I was scared by the bones? I kiss'd 'em, I  
buried 'em all—  
I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night by the churchyard  
wall.  
My Willy 'll rise up whole when the trumpet of judgment 'll  
sound,  
But I charge you never to say that I laid him in holy ground.

They would scratch him up—they would hang him again  
on the cursed tree.  
Sin? O, yes, we are sinners, I know—let all that be,  
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's goodwill toward  
men—  
"Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord"—let me hear  
it again;  
"Full of compassion and mercy—long-suffering." Yes,  
O, yes!  
For the lawyer is born but to murder—the Saviour lives  
but to bless.

*He* 'll never put on the black cap except for the worst of  
the worst,  
And the first may be last—I have heard it in church—and  
the last may be first.  
Suffering—O, long-suffering—yes, as the Lord must know,  
Year after year in the mist and the wind and the shower  
and the snow.

Heard, have you? what? they have told you he never re-  
pented his sin.  
How do they know it? are *they* his mother? are *you* of  
his kin?  
Heard! have you ever heard, when the storm on the downs  
began,  
The wind that 'll wail like a child and the sea that 'll moan  
like a man?

Election, Election, and Reprobation—it's all very well.  
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall not find him in Hell.  
For I cared so much for my boy that the Lord has look'd  
into my care,  
And He means me I'm sure to be happy with Willy, I  
know not where.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul, that is all your  
desire—  
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my boy be gone  
to the fire?  
I have been with God in the dark—go, go, you may leave  
me alone—  
You never have borne a child—you are just as hard as a  
stone.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that you mean to  
be kind,  
But I cannot hear what you say for my Willy's voice in  
the wind—  
The snow and the sky so bright—he used but to call in  
the dark,

And he calls to me now from the church and not from the  
gibbet—for hark!

Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is coming—shaking the  
walls—

Willy—the moon 's in a cloud—Good-night. I am going.  
He calls.

648

TO VIRGIL

ROMAN VIRGIL, thou that singest Ilion's lofty temples robed  
in fire,  
Ilion falling, Rome arising, wars, and filial faith, and Dido's  
pyre;

Landscape-lover, lord of language more than he that sang  
the "Works and Days,"  
All the chosen coin of fancy flashing out from many a  
golden phrase;

Thou that singest wheat and woodland, tilth and vineyard,  
hive and horse and herd;  
All the charm of all the Muses often flowering in a lonely  
word;

Poet of the happy Tityrus piping underneath his beechen  
bowers;  
Poet of the poet-satyr whom the laughing shepherd bound  
with flowers;

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying in the blissful years again  
to be,  
Summers of the snakeless meadow, unlaborious earth and  
oarless sea;

Thou that seest Universal Nature moved by Universal  
Mind;  
Thou majestic in thy sadness at the doubtful doom of  
human kind;

Light among the vanish'd ages; star that gildest yet this  
phantom shore;  
Golden branch amid the shadows, kings and realms that  
pass to rise no more;

Now thy Forum roars no longer, fallen every purple  
Cæsar's dome—  
Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm sound forever of Imperial  
Rome—

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd, and the Rome of  
freemen holds her place,  
I, from out the Northern Islands sunder'd once from all  
the human race,

I salute thee, Mantovano, I that loved thee since my day  
began,  
Wielder of the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips  
of man.

649

MAUD

I

I

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,  
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,  
The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of blood,  
And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers "Death."

2

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was found,  
His who had given me life—O father! O God! was it  
well?—  
Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dinted into the  
ground:  
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell,

## 3

Did he fling himself down? who knows? for a vast specu-  
lation had fail'd,  
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd with  
despair,  
And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken worldling  
wail'd,  
And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro'  
the air.

## 4

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirr'd  
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a whisper'd  
fright,  
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart  
as I heard  
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering  
night.

## 5

Villainy somewhere! whose? One says, we are villains all.  
Not he: his honest fame should at least by me be maintain'd:  
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and the Hall,  
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid  
and drain'd.

## 6

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace? we have made  
them a curse,  
Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not its own;  
And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better or worse  
Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his own  
hearthstone?

## 7

But these are the days of advance, the works of the men of  
mind,  
When who but a fool would have faith in a tradesman's  
ware or his word?

Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and that of a  
kind  
The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword.

## 8

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print  
Of the golden age—why not? I have neither hope nor  
trust;  
May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a flint,  
Cheat and be cheated, and die: who knows? we are ashes  
and dust.

## 9

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by,  
When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each sex,  
like swine,  
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie;  
Peace in her vineyard—yes!—but a company forges the  
wine.

## 10

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's head,  
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled  
wife,  
And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for  
bread,  
And the spirit of murder works in the very means of life.

## 11

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villainous center-bits  
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless nights,  
While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps, as  
he sits  
To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights.

## 12

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial fee,  
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's bones,  
Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and by sea,  
War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.

## 13

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,  
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out  
of the foam,  
That the smoothfaced snubnosed rogue would leap from his  
counter and till,  
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yard-  
wand, home.—

## 14

What! am I raging alone as my father raged in his mood?  
Must *I* too creep to the hollow and dash myself down and  
die  
Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore to brood  
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swindler's lie?

## 15

Would there be sorrow for *me*? there was *love* in the pas-  
sionate shriek,  
Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to the  
grave—  
Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would rise  
and speak  
And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God, as he used to rave.

## 16

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the moor  
and the main.  
Why should I stay? can a sweeter chance ever come to  
me here?  
O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves of  
pain,  
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit and  
the fear?

## 17

Workmen up at the Hall!—they are coming back from  
abroad;  
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a millionaire:



I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular beauty of  
 Maud;  
 I play'd with the girl when a child; she promised then to  
 be fair.

## 18

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles and child-  
 ish escapes,  
 Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall,  
 Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father dangled  
 the grapes,  
 Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced darling  
 of all,—

## 19

What is she now? My dreams are bad. She may bring me  
 a curse.  
 No, there is fatter game on the moor; she will let me alone.  
 Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or man be  
 the worse.  
 I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may pipe to  
 his own.

## II

LONG have I sigh'd for a calm: God grant I may find it  
 at last!  
 It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither savour  
 nor salt,  
 ' But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her carriage  
 past,  
 Perfectly beautiful: let it be granted her: where is the  
 fault?  
 All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be seen)  
 Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,  
 Dead perfection, no more; nothing more, if it had not been  
 For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of the  
 rose,  
 Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full,  
 Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive nose,  
 From which I escaped heart-free, with the least little touch  
 of spleen.

## III

COLD and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly meek,  
Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was drown'd,  
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the cheek,  
Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom profound;  
Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient wrong  
Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale as  
before

Growing and fading and growing upon me without a  
sound,

Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night long  
Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it no  
more,

But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden ground,  
Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung ship-wrecking  
roar,

Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd down by  
the wave,

Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found  
The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

## IV.

## I

A MILLION emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime  
In the little grove where I sit—ah, wherefore cannot I be  
Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful season bland,  
When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer  
clime,

Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,  
The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land?

## 2

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and  
small!

And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and  
spite;

And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as a Czar;

And here on the landward side, by a red rock, glimmers  
the Hall;  
And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a light;  
But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading star!

## 3

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head of  
the race?  
I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her brother  
I bow'd;  
I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the moor;  
But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beautiful  
face.  
O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being so  
proud;  
Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless  
and poor.

## 4

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander  
and steal;  
I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stoic, or like  
A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way:  
For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can  
heal;  
The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd by  
the shrike,  
And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder  
and prey.

## 5

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in  
her flower;  
Do we move ourselves, or are we moved by an unseen hand  
at a game  
That pushes us off from the board, and others ever succeed?  
Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an hour;  
We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a brother's  
shame;  
However we brave it out, we men are a little breed.

## 6

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of  
Earth,  
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,  
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning  
race.  
As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his  
birth,  
So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man:  
He now is first, but is he the last? is he not too base?

## 7

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and vain,  
An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor;  
The passionate heart of the poet is whirl'd into folly and  
vice.  
I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate brain;  
For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it, were  
more  
Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden  
of spice.

## 8

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the  
veil.  
Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring  
them about?  
Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is wide.  
Shall I weep if a Poland fall? shall I shriek if a Hungary  
fail?  
Or an infant civilisation be ruled with rod or with knout?  
I have not made the world, and He that made it will guide.

## 9

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland ways,  
Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be my  
lot,  
Far-off from the clamour of liars belied in the hubbub  
of lies;

From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever  
hissing dispraise  
Because their natures are little, and, whether he heed  
it or not, '  
Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of poisonous  
flies.

## IO

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness of  
love,  
The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill.  
Ah Maud, you milkwhite fawn, you are all unmeet for a  
wife.  
Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in marble  
above;  
Your father is ever in London, you wander about at your  
will;  
You have but fed on the roses, and lain in the lilies of  
life.

## V

## I

A VOICE by the cedar tree,  
In the meadow under the Hall!  
She is singing an air that is known to me,  
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,  
A martial song like a trumpet's call!  
Singing alone in the morning of life,  
In the happy morning of life and of May,  
Singing of men that in battle array,  
Ready in heart and ready in hand,  
March with banner and bugle and fife  
To the death, for their native land.

## 2

Maud with her exquisite face,  
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,  
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,  
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,

Singing of Death, and of Honour that cannot die,  
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and mean,  
And myself so languid and base.

## 3

Silence, beautiful voice!  
Be still, for you only trouble the mind  
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,  
A glory I shall not find.  
Still! I will hear you no more,  
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice  
But to move to the meadow and fall before  
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,  
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind  
Not her, not her, but a voice.

## VI

## I

MORNING arises stormy and pale,  
No sun, but a wannish glare  
In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,  
And the budded peaks of the wood are bow'd  
Caught and cuff'd by the gale:  
I had fancied it would be fair.

## 2

Whom but Maud should I meet  
Last night, when the sunset burn'd  
On the blossom'd gable-ends  
At the head of the village street,  
Whom but Maud should I meet?  
And she touch'd my hand with a smile so sweet  
She made me divine amends  
For a courtesy not return'd.

## 3

And thus a delicate spark  
Of glowing and growing light

Thro' the livelong hours of the dark  
Kept itself warm in the heart of my dreams,  
Ready to burst in a colour'd flame;  
Till at last when the morning came  
In a cloud, it faded, and seems  
But an ashen-gray delight.

## 4

What if with her sunny hair,  
And smile as sunny as cold,  
She meant to weave me a snare  
Of some coquettish deceit,  
Cleopatra-like as of old  
To entangle me when we met,  
To have her lion roll in a silken net  
And fawn at a victor's feet.

## 5

Ah, what shall I be at fifty  
Should Nature keep me alive,  
If I find the world so bitter  
When I am but twenty-five?  
Yet, if she were not a cheat,  
If Maud were all that she seem'd,  
And her smile were all that I dream'd,  
Then the world were not so bitter  
But a smile could make it sweet.

## 6

What if tho' her eye seem'd full  
Of a kind intent to me,  
What if that dandy-despot, he,  
That jewell'd mass of millinery,  
That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull  
Smelling of musk and of insolence,  
Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,  
Who wants the finer politic sense  
To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,



With a glassy smile his brutal scorn—  
What if he had told her yestermorn  
How prettily for his own sweet sake  
A face of tenderness might be feign'd,  
And a moist mirage in desert eyes,  
That so, when the rotten hustings shake  
In another month to his brazen lies,  
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

## 7

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,  
Keep watch and ward, keep watch and ward,  
Or thou wilt prove their tool.  
Yea too, myself from myself I guard,  
For often a man's own angry pride  
Is cap and bells for a fool.

## 8

Perhaps the smile and tender tone  
Came out of her pitying womanhood,  
For am I not, am I not, here alone  
So many a summer since she died,  
My mother, who was so gentle and good?  
Living alone in an empty house,  
Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,  
Where I hear the dead at midday moan,  
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot mouse,  
And my own sad name in corners cried,  
When the shiver of dancing leaves is thrown  
About its echoing chambers wide,  
Till a morbid hate and horror have grown  
Of a world in which I have hardly mixt,  
And a morbid eating lichen fixt  
On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

## 9

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and caught  
By that you swore to withstand?  
For what was it else with me wrought

But, I fear, the new strong wine of love,  
That made my tongue so stammer and trip  
When I saw the treasured splendour, her hand,  
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,  
And the sunlight broke from her lip?

## 10

I have play'd with her when a child;  
She remembers it now we meet.  
Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled  
By some coquettish deceit.  
Yet, if she were not a cheat,  
If Maud were all that she seem'd,  
And her smile had all that I dream'd,  
Then the world were not so bitter  
But a smile could make it sweet.

## VII

## I

DID I hear it half in a doze  
Long since, I know not where?  
Did I dream it an hour ago,  
When asleep in this arm-chair?

## 2

Men were drinking together,  
Drinking and talking of me;  
"Well, if it prove a girl, the boy  
Will have plenty: so let it be."

## 3

Is it an echo of something  
Read with a boy's delight,  
Viziers nodding together  
In some Arabian night?

## 4

Strange, that I hear two men,  
Somewhere, talking of me;  
"Well, if it prove a girl, my boy  
Will have plenty: so let it be."

## VIII

SHE came to the village church,  
And sat by a pillar alone;  
An angel watching an urn  
Wept over her, carved in stone;  
And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,  
And suddenly, sweet, strangely blush'd  
To find they were met by my own;  
And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat stronger  
And thicker, until I heard no longer  
The snowy-banded, dilettante,  
Delicate-handed priest intone;  
And thought, is it pride, and mused and sigh'd  
"No surely, now it cannot be pride."

## IX

I WAS walking a mile,  
More than a mile from the shore,  
The sun look'd out with a smile  
Betwixt the cloud and the moor,  
And riding at set of day  
Over the dark moor land,  
Rapidly riding far away,  
She waved to me with her hand.  
There were two at her side,  
Something flash'd in the sun,  
Down by the hill I saw them ride,  
In a moment they were gone:  
Like a sudden spark  
Struck vainly in the night,  
Then returns the dark  
With no more hope of light.

## X

## I

SICK, am I sick of a jealous dread?  
Was not one of the two at her side  
This new-made lord, whose splendour plucks  
The slavish hat from the villager's head?  
Whose old grandfather has lately died,  
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom  
Grimy nakedness dragging his trucks  
And laying his trams in a poison'd gloom  
Wrought, till he crept from a gutted mine  
Master of half a servile shire,  
And left his coal all turn'd into gold  
To a grandson, first of his noble line,  
Rich in the grace all women desire,  
Strong in the power that all men adore,  
And simper and set their voices lower,  
And soften as if to a girl, and hold  
Awe-stricken breaths at a work divine,  
Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,  
New as his title, built last year,  
There amid perky larches and pine,  
And over the sullen-purple moor  
(Look at it) pricking a cockney ear.

## 2

What, has he found my jewel out?  
For one of the two that rode at her side  
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he:  
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a bride.  
Blithe would her brother's acceptance be.  
Maud could be gracious too, no doubt,  
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,  
A bought commission, a waxen face,  
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—  
Bought? what is it he cannot buy?  
And therefore splenetic, personal, base,

A wounded thing with a rancorous cry,  
At war with myself and a wretched race,  
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

## 3

Last week came one to the county town,  
To preach our poor little army down,  
And play the game of the despot kings,  
Tho' the state has done it and thrice as well:  
This broad-brimm'd hawker of holy things,  
Whose ear is stuff'd with his cotton, and rings  
Even in dreams to the chink of his pence,  
This huckster put down war! can he tell  
Whether war be a cause or a consequence?  
Put down the passions that make earth Hell!  
Down with ambition, avarice, pride,  
Jealousy, down! cut off from the mind  
The bitter springs of anger and fear;  
Down too, down at your own fireside,  
With the evil tongue, and the evil ear,  
For each is at war with mankind.

## 4

I wish I could hear again  
The chivalrous battle-song  
That she warbled alone in her joy!  
I might persuade myself then  
She would not do herself this great wrong  
To take a wanton dissolute boy  
For a man and leader of men.

## 5

Ah God, for a man with heart, head, hand,  
Like some of the simple great ones gone  
For ever and ever by,  
One still strong man in a blatant land,  
Whatever they call him, what care I,  
Aristocrat, democrat, plutocrat—one  
Who can rule and dare not lie.

## 6

And ah for a man to rise in me,  
That the man I am may cease to be!

## XI

O LET the solid ground  
Not fail beneath my feet  
Before my life has found  
What some have found so sweet;  
Then let come what come may,  
What matter if I go mad,  
I shall have had my day.

## 2

Let the sweet heavens endure,  
Not close and darken above me  
Before I am quite sure  
That there is one to love me;  
Then let come what come may  
To a life that has been so sad,  
I shall have had my day.

## XII

## I

BIRDS in the high Hall-garden  
When twilight was falling,  
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,  
They were crying and calling.

## 2

Where was Maud? in our wood;  
And I, who else, was with her,  
Gathering woodland lilies,  
Myriads blow together.

## 3

Birds in our wood sang  
    Ringing thro' the valleys,  
Maud is here, here, here  
    In among the lilies.

## 4

I kiss'd her slender hand,  
    She took the kiss sedately;  
Maud is not seventeen,  
    But she is tall and stately.

## 5

I to cry out on pride  
    Who have won her favour!  
O Maud were sure of Heaven  
    If lowliness could save her.

## 6

I know the way she went  
    Home with her maiden posy,  
For her feet have touch'd the meadows  
    And left the daisies rosy.

## 7

Birds in the high Hall-garden  
    Were crying and calling to her,  
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud?  
    One is come to woo her.

## 8

Look, a horse at the door,  
    And little King Charles is snarling,  
Go back, my lord, across the moor,  
    You are not her darling.

## XIII

## I

SCORN'D, to be scorn'd by one that I scorn,  
Is that a matter to make me fret?  
That a calamity hard to be borne?  
Well, he may live to hate me yet.  
Fool that I am to be vex't with his pride!  
I past him, I was crossing his lands;  
He stood on the path a little aside;  
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite  
Has a broad-blown comeliness, red and white,  
And six feet two, as I think, he stands;  
But his essences turn'd the live air sick,  
And barbarous opulence jewel-thick  
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his hands.

## 2

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,  
I long'd so heartily then and there  
To give him the grasp of fellowship;  
But while I past he was humming an air,  
Stopt, and then with a riding whip  
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,  
And curving a contumelious lip,  
Gorgonised me from head to foot  
With a stony British stare.

## 3

Why sits he here in his father's chair?  
That old man never comes to his place:  
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen?  
For only once, in the village street,  
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his face,  
A gray old wolf and a lean.  
Scarcely, now, would I call him a cheat:  
For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,  
She might by a true descent be untrue;



And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet:  
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due  
To the sweeter blood by the other side;  
Her mother has been a thing complete,  
However she came to be so allied.  
And fair without, faithful within,  
Maud to him is nothing akin:  
Some peculiar mystic grace  
Made her only the child of her mother,  
And heap'd the whole inherited sin  
On that huge scapegoat of the race,  
All, all upon the brother.

## 4

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be!  
Has not his sister smiled on me?

## XIV

## I

MAUD has a garden of roses  
And lilies fair on a lawn;  
There she walks in her state  
And tends upon bed and bower,  
And thither I climb'd at dawn  
And stood by her garden-gate;  
A lion ramps at the top,  
He is claspt by a passion-flower.

## 2

Maud's own little oak-room  
(Which Maud, like a precious stone  
Set in the heart of the carven gloom,  
Lights with herself, when alone  
She sits by her music and books,  
And her brother lingers late  
With a roystering company) looks  
Upon Maud's own garden gate:  
And I thought as I stood, if a hand, as white

As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid  
 On the hasp of the window, and my Delight  
 Had a sudden desire, like a glorious ghost, to glide,  
 Like a beam of the seventh Heaven, down to my side,  
 There were but a step to be made.

## 3

The fancy flatter'd my mind,  
 And again seem'd overbold;  
 Now I thought that she cared for me,  
 Now I thought she was kind  
 Only because she was cold.

## 4

I heard no sound where I stood  
 But the rivulet on from the lawn  
 Running down to my own dark wood;  
 Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it swell'd  
 Now and then in the dim-gray dawn;  
 But I look'd, and round, all round the house I  
       beheld  
 The death-white curtain drawn;  
 Felt a horror over me creep,  
 Prickle my skin and catch my breath,  
 Knew that the death-white curtain meant but  
       sleep,  
 Yet I shudder'd and thought like a fool of the  
       sleep of death.

## XV

So dark a mind within me dwells,  
       And I make myself such evil cheer,  
 That if *I* be dear to some one else  
       Then some one else may have much to fear;  
 But if *I* be dear to some one else,  
       Then I should be to myself more dear.  
 Shall I not take care of all that I think,  
 Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,  
 If I be dear,  
 If I be dear to some one else.

## XVI

## I

THIS lump of earth has left his estate  
The lighter by the loss of his weight;  
And so that he find what he went to seek,  
And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and drown  
His heart in the gross mud-honey of town,  
He may stay for a year who has gone for a week.  
But this is the day when I must speak,  
And I see my Oread coming down,  
O this is the day!  
O beautiful creature, what am I  
That I dare to look her way;  
Think I may hold dominion sweet,  
Lord of the pulse that is lord of her breast,  
And dream of her beauty with tender dread,  
From the delicate Arab arch of her feet  
To the grace that, bright and light as the crest  
Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,  
And she knows it not: O, if she knew it,  
To know her beauty might half undo it.  
I know it the one bright thing to save  
My yet young life in the wilds of Time,  
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from crime,  
Perhaps from a selfish grave.

## 2

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool lord,  
Dare I bid her abide by her word?  
Should I love her so well if she  
Had given her word to a thing so low?  
Shall I love her as well if she  
Can break her word were it even for me?  
I trust that it is not so.

## 3

Catch not my breath, O clamorous heart,  
Let not my tongue be a thrall to my eye  
For I must tell her before we part,  
I must tell her, or die.

## XVII

Go not, happy day,  
From the shining fields,  
Go not, happy day,  
Till the maiden yields.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.  
When the happy Yes  
Falters from her lips,  
Pass and blush the news  
O'er the blowing ships.  
Over blowing seas,  
Over seas at rest,  
Pass the happy news,  
Blush it thro' the West;  
Till the red man dance  
By his red cedar tree,  
And the red man's babe  
Leap, beyond the sea.  
Blush from West to East,  
Blush from East to West,  
Till the West is East,  
Blush it thro' the West.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.

## XVIII

## I

I HAVE led her home, my love, my only friend.  
There is none like her, none.  
And never yet so warmly ran my blood  
And sweetly, on and on  
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,  
Full to the banks, close on the promised good.

## 2

None like her, none.

Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pattering talk  
Seem'd her light foot along the garden walk,  
And shook my heart to think she comes once more  
But even then I heard her close the door,  
The gates of Heaven are closed, and she is gone.

## 3

There is none like her, none.

Nor will be when our summers have deceased.  
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon  
In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious East,  
Sighing for Lebanon,  
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here increased,  
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,  
And looking to the South, and fed  
With honey'd rain and delicate air,  
And haunted by the starry head  
Of her whose gentle will has changed my fate,  
And made my life a perfumed altar-flame;  
And over whom thy darkness must have spread  
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great  
Forefathers of the thornless garden, there  
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from whom she came.

## 4

Here will I lie, while these long branches sway,  
And you fair stars that crown a happy day  
Go in and out as if at merry play,  
Who am no more so all forlorn  
As when it seem'd far better to be born  
To labour and the mattock-harden'd hand,  
Than nursed at ease and brought to understand  
A sad astrology, the boundless plan  
That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,  
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,  
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand  
His nothingness into man.

## 5

But now shine on, and what care I,  
Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl  
The countercharm of space and hollow sky,  
And do accept my madness, and would die  
To save from some slight shame one simple girl.

## 6

Would die; for sullen-seeming Death may give  
More life to love than is or ever was  
In our low world, where yet 'tis sweet to live.  
Let no one ask me how it came to pass;  
It seems that I am happy, that to me  
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,  
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

## 7

Not die; but live a life of truest breath,  
And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs.  
O, why should Love, like men in drinking-songs,  
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of death?  
Make answer, Maud my bliss,  
Maud made my Maud by that long loving kiss,  
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this?  
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven here  
With dear Love's tie, makes Love himself more dear."

## 8

Is that enchanted moan only the swell  
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay?  
And hark the clock within, the silver knell  
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal white,  
And died to live, long as my pulses play;  
But now by this my love has closed her sight  
And given false death her hand, and stol'n away  
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies dwell  
Among the fragments of the golden day.  
May nothing there her maiden grace affright!

Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy spell.  
My bride to be, my evermore delight,  
My own heart's heart, my ownest own, farewell;  
It is but for a little space I go:  
And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell  
Beat to the noiseless music of the night!  
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the glow  
Of your soft splendours that you look so bright?  
*I* have climb'd nearer out of lonely Hell.  
Beat, happy stars, timing with things below,  
Beat with my heart more blest than heart can tell,  
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe  
That seems to draw—but it shall not be so:  
Let all be well, be well.

## XIX

## I

HER brother is coming back to-night,  
Breaking up my dream of delight.

## 2

My dream? do I dream of bliss?  
I have walk'd awake with Truth.  
O when did a morning shine  
So rich in atonement as this  
For my dark-dawning youth,  
And that dead man at her heart and mine:  
For who was left to watch her but I?  
Yet so did I let my freshness die.

## 3

I trust that I did not talk  
To gentle Maud in our walk  
(For often in lonely wanderings  
I have cursed him even to lifeless things)  
But I trust that I did not talk,  
Not touch on her father's sin:

I am sure I did but speak  
Of my mother's faded cheek  
When it slowly grew so thin,  
That I felt she was slowly dying  
Vext with lawyers and harass'd with debt:  
For how often I caught her with eyes all wet,  
Shaking her head at her son and sighing  
A world of trouble within!

## 4

And Maud too, Maud was moved  
To speak of the mother she loved  
As one scarce less forlorn,  
Dying abroad and it seems apart  
From him who had ceased to share her heart,  
And ever mourning over the feud,  
The household Fury sprinkled with blood  
By which our houses are torn:  
How strange was what she said,  
When only Maud and the brother  
Hung over her dying bed—  
That Maud's dark father and mine  
Had bound us one to the other,  
Betrothed us over their wine,  
On the day when Maud was born;  
Seal'd her mine from her first sweet breath.  
Mine, mine by a right, from birth till death  
Mine, mine—our fathers have sworn.

## 5

But the true blood spilt had in it a heat  
To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,  
That, if left uncancell'd, had been so sweet:  
And none of us thought of a something beyond,  
A desire that awoke in the heart of the child,  
As it were a duty done to the tomb,  
To be friends for her sake, to be reconciled;  
And I was cursing them and my doom,  
And letting a dangerous thought run wild



White alone shined in the fragrant gloom  
 Of her own chamber. I sat her there,  
 Brighter than the sun, breathing a prayer  
 To be known, to be remembered!

## 6

But then when a time he had  
 Almost at evening, at home,  
 I had weened her we should be  
 Thus because she laugh'd her down,  
 And at last when last came home  
 He had darken'd her, a flower,  
 And her and turned her to speak  
 To me, her friend of the years before;  
 And that was what had redd'n'd her cheek  
 When I bow'd to her on the moor.

## 7

Yet Maud, altho' not blind  
 To the faults of his heart and mind,  
 I see she cannot but love him,  
 And says he is rough but kind,  
 And wishes me to approve him,  
 And tells me, when she lay  
 Sick once, with a fear of worse,  
 That he left his wine and horses and play,  
 Sat with her, read to her, night and day,  
 And tended her like a nurse.

## 8

Kind? but the deathbed desire  
 Sweeten'd by the love of the dear—  
 Rough but kind? yet I know  
 He has plann'd against me to this  
 That he thus against me still  
 Kind to Maud? that were not amiss.  
 Well, rough but kind; why, let it be so:  
 For shall not Maud have her will?

## 9

For, Maud, so tender and true,  
As long as my life endures  
I feel I shall owe you a debt,  
That I never can hope to pay;  
And if ever I should forget  
That I owe this debt to you  
And for your sweet sake to yours;  
O then, what then shall I say?—  
If ever I *should* forget,  
May God make me more wretched  
Than ever I have been yet!

## 10

So now I have sworn to bury  
All this dead body of hate,  
I feel so free and so clear  
By the loss of that dead weight,  
That I should grow light-headed, I fear,  
Fantastically merry;  
But that her brother comes, like a blight  
On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-night.

## XX

## I

STRANGE, that I felt so gay,  
Strange, that *I* tried to-day  
To beguile her melancholy;  
The Sultan, as we name him,—  
She did not wish to blame him—  
But he vexed her and perplexed her  
With his worldly talk and folly:  
Was it gentle to reprove her  
For stealing out of view  
From a little lazy lover  
Who but claims her as his due?  
Or for chilling his caresses

By the coldness of her manners,  
Nay, the plainness of her dresses?  
Now I know her but in two,  
Nor can pronounce upon it  
If one should ask me whether  
The habit, hat, and feather,  
Or the frock and gipsy bonnet  
Be the neater and completer;  
For nothing can be sweeter  
Than maiden Maud in either.

## 2

But to-morrow, if we live,  
Our ponderous squire will give  
A grand political dinner  
To half the squirrelings near;  
And Maud will wear her jewels,  
And the bird of prey will hover,  
And the titmouse hope to win her  
With his chirrup at her ear.

## 3

A grand political dinner  
To the men of many acres,  
A gathering of the Tory,  
A dinner and then a dance  
For the maids and marriage-makers,  
And every eye but mine will glance  
At Maud in all her glory.

## 4

For I am not invited,  
But, with the Sultan's pardon,  
I am all as well delighted,  
For I know her own rose-garden,  
And mean to linger in it  
Till the dancing will be over;  
And then, oh then, come out to me  
For a minute, but for a minute,

Come out to your own true lover,  
 That your true lover may see  
 Your glory also, and render  
 All homage to his own darling,  
 Queen Maud in all her splendour.

## XXI

RIVULET crossing my ground,  
 And bringing me down from the Hall  
 This garden-rose that I found,  
 Forgetful of Maud and me,  
 And lost in trouble and moving round  
 Here at the head of a tinkling fall,  
 And trying to pass to the sea;  
 O Rivulet, born at the Hall,  
 My Maud has sent it by thee  
 (If I read her sweet will right)  
 On a blushing mission to me,  
 Saying in odour and colour, "Ah, be  
 Among the roses to-night."

## XXII

## I

COME into the garden, Maud,  
 For the black bat, night, has flown,  
 Come into the garden, Maud,  
 I am here at the gate alone;  
 And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,  
 And the musk of the roses blown.

## 2

For a breeze of morning moves,  
 And the planet of Love is on high,  
 Beginning to faint in the light that she loves  
 On a bed of daffodil sky,  
 To faint in the light of the sun she loves,  
 To faint in his light, and to die.

## 3

All night have the roses heard  
The flute, violin, bassoon;  
All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd  
To the dancers dancing in tune;  
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,  
And a hush with the setting moon.

## 4

I said to the lily, "There is but one  
With whom she has heart to be gay.  
When will the dancers leave her alone?  
She is weary of dance and play."  
Now half to the setting moon are gone,  
And half to the rising day;  
Low on the sand and loud on the stone  
The last wheel echoes away.

## 5

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes  
In babble and revel and wine.  
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,  
For one that will never be thine?  
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,  
"For ever and ever, mine."

## 6

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,  
As the music clash'd in the hall;  
And long by the garden lake I stood,  
For I heard your rivulet fall  
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,  
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

## 7

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet  
That whenever a March-wind sighs  
He sets the jewel-print of your feet

In violets blue as your eyes,  
To the woody hollows in which we meet  
And the valleys of Paradise.

## 8

The slender acacia would not shake  
One long milk-bloom on the tree;  
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake,  
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;  
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,  
Knowing your promise to me;  
The lilies and roses were all awake,  
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

## 9

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,  
Come hither, the dances are done,  
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,  
Queen lily and rose in one;  
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,  
To the flowers, and be their sun.

## 10

There has fallen a splendid tear  
From the passion-flower at the gate.  
She is coming, my dove, my dear;  
She is coming, my life, my fate;  
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;  
And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"  
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"  
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

## 11

She is coming, my own, my sweet,  
Were it ever so airy a tread,  
My heart would hear her and beat,  
Were it earth in an earthy bed;  
My dust would hear her and beat,

Had I lain for a century dead;  
Would start and tremble under her feet,  
And blossom in purple and red.

## PART II

## I

## I

THE fault was mine, the fault was mine—  
Why am I sitting here so stunn'd and still,  
Plucking the harmless wild-flower on the hill?—  
It is this guilty hand!—  
And there rises ever a passionate cry  
From underneath in the darkening land—  
What is it, that has been done?  
O dawn of Eden bright over earth and sky,  
The fires of Hell brake out of thy rising sun,  
The fires of Hell and of Hate;  
For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken a word,  
When her brother ran in his rage to the gate  
He came with the babe-faced lord;  
Heap'd on her terms of disgrace,  
And while she wept, and I strove to be cool,  
He fiercely gave me the lie,  
Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,  
And he struck me, madman, over the face,  
Struck me before the languid fool,  
Who was gaping and grinning by:  
Struck for himself an evil stroke;  
Wrought for his house an irredeemable woe  
For front to front in an hour we stood,  
And a million horrible bellowing echoes broke  
From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the wood,  
And thunder'd up into Heaven the Christless code,  
That must have life for a blow.  
Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to grow.  
Was it he lay there with a fading eye?  
"The fault was mine," he whisper'd, "fly!"  
Then glided out of the joyous wood

The ghastly Wraith of one that I know;  
 And there rang on a sudden a passionate cry,  
 A cry for a brother's blood:  
 It will ring in my heart and my ears, till I die, till  
 I die.

## 2

Is it gone? my pulses beat—  
 What was it? a lying trick of the brain?  
 Yet I thought I saw her stand,  
 A shadow there at my feet,  
 High over the shadowy land.  
 It is gone; and the heavens fall in a gentle rain,  
 When they should burst and drown with deluging  
 storms  
 The feeble vassals of wine and anger and lust,  
 The little hearts that know not how to forgive: '  
 Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold Thee just,  
 Strike dead the whole weak race of venomous worms,  
 That sting each other here in the dust;  
 We are not worthy to live.

## II

## I

SEE what a lovely shell,  
 Small and pure as a pearl,  
 Lying close to my foot,  
 Frail, but a work divine,  
 Made so fairly well  
 With delicate spire and whorl,  
 How exquisitely minute,  
 A miracle of design!

## 2

What is it? a learned man  
 Could give it a clumsy name.  
 Let him name it who can,  
 The beauty would be the same.



## 3

The tiny cell is forlorn,  
Void of the little living will  
That made it stir on the shore.  
Did he stand at the diamond door  
Of his house in a rainbow frill?  
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,  
A golden foot or a fairy horn  
Thro' his dim water-world?

## 4

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap  
Of my finger-nail on the sand,  
Small, but a work divine,  
Frail, but of force to withstand,  
Year upon year, the shock  
Of cataract seas that snap  
The three-decker's oaken spine  
Athwart the ledges of rock,  
Here on the Breton strand!

## 5

Breton, not Briton; here  
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast  
Of ancient fable and fear—  
Plagued with a flitting to and fro,  
A disease, a hard mechanic ghost  
That never came from on high  
Nor ever arose from below,  
But only moves with the moving eye,  
Flying along the land and the main—  
Why should it look like Maud?  
Am I to be overawed  
By what I cannot but know  
Is a juggle born of the brain?

## 6

Back from the Breton coast,  
Sick of a nameless fear,

Back to the dark sea-line  
Looking, thinking of all I have lost;  
An old song vexes my ear;  
But that of Lamech is mine.

## 7

For years, a measureless ill,  
For years, for ever, to part—  
But she, she would love me still;  
And as long, O God, as she  
Have a grain of love for me,  
So long, no doubt, no doubt,  
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,  
However weary, a spark of will  
Not to be trampled out.

## 8

Strange, that the mind, when fraught  
With a passion so intense  
One would think that it well  
Might drown all life in the eye,—  
That it should, by being so over-wrought,  
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense  
For a shell, or a flower, little things  
Which else would have been past by!  
And now I remember, I,  
When he lay dying there,  
I noticed one of his many rings  
(For he had many, poor worm) and thought  
It is his mother's hair.

## 9

Who knows if he be dead?  
Whether I need have fled?  
Am I guilty of blood?  
However this may be,  
Comfort her, comfort her, all things good,  
While I am over the sea!

Let me and my passionate love go by,  
But speak to her all things holy and high,  
Whatever happens to me!  
Me and my harmful love go by;  
But come to her waking, find her asleep,  
Powers of the height, Powers of the deep,  
And comfort her tho' I die.

## III

COURAGE, poor heart of stone  
I will not ask thee why  
Thou canst not understand  
That thou art left for ever alone:  
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—  
Or if I ask thee why,  
Care not thou to reply:  
She is but dead, and the time is at hand  
When thou shalt more than die.

## IV

## I

O THAT 'twere possible  
After long grief and pain  
To find the arms of my true love  
Round me once again!

## 2

When I was wont to meet her  
In the silent woody places  
By the home that gave me birth,  
We stood tranced in long embraces  
Mixt with kisses sweeter sweeter  
Than anything on earth.

## 3

A shadow flits before me,  
Not thou, but like to thee;  
Ah Christ, that it were possible  
For one short hour to see  
The souls we loved, that they might tell us  
What and where they be.

## 4

It leads me forth at evening,  
It lightly winds and steals  
In a cold white robe before me,  
When all my spirit reels  
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,  
And the roaring of the wheels.

## 5

Half the night I waste in sighs,  
Half in dreams I sorrow after  
The delight of early skies;  
In a wakeful doze I sorrow  
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,  
For the meeting of the morrow  
The delight of happy laughter,  
The delight of low replies.

## 6

'Tis a morning pure and sweet  
And a dewy splendour falls  
On the little flower that clings  
To the turrets and the walls;  
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And the light and shadow fleet;  
She is walking in the meadow,  
And the woodland echo rings;  
In a moment we shall meet;  
She is singing in the meadow,

And the rivulet at her feet  
Ripples on in light and shadow  
To the ballad that she sings.

## 7

Do I hear her sing as of old,  
My bird with the shining head,  
My own dove with the tender eye?  
But there rings on a sudden a passionate cry,  
There is some one dying or dead,  
And a sullen thunder is roll'd;  
For a tumult shakes the city,  
And I wake, my dream is fled;  
In the shuddering dawn, behold,  
Without knowledge, without pity,  
By the curtains of my bed  
That abiding phantom cold.

## 8

Get thee hence, nor come again,  
Mix not memory with doubt,  
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain  
Pass and cease to move about,  
'Tis the blot upon the brain  
That *will* show itself without.

## 9

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,  
And the yellow vapours choke  
The great city sounding wide;  
The day comes, a dull red ball  
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke  
On the misty river-tide.

## 10

Thro' the hubbub of the market  
I steal, a wasted frame,  
It crosses here, it crosses there,

Thro' all that crowd confused and loud  
The shadow still the same;  
And on my heavy eyelids  
My anguish hangs like shame.

## II

Alas for her that met me,  
That heard me softly call,  
Came glimmering thro' the laurels  
At the quiet evenfall,  
In the garden by the turrets  
Of the old manorial hall.

## I2

Would the happy spirit descend,  
From the realms of light and song,  
In the chamber or the street,  
As she looks among the blest,  
Should I fear to greet my friend  
Or to say "Forgive the wrong,"  
Or to ask her, "Take me, sweet,  
To the regions of thy rest"?

## I3

But the broad light glares and beats,  
And the shadow flits and fleets  
And will not let me be;  
And I loathe the squares and streets,  
And the faces that one meets,  
Hearts with no love for me:  
Always I long to creep  
Into some still cavern deep,  
There to weep, and weep, and weep  
My whole soul out to thee.

## V

## I

DEAD, long dead,  
Long dead!

And my heart is a handful of dust,  
And my bones are shaken with pain,  
For into a shallow grave they are thrust,  
Only a yard beneath the street,  
And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,  
The hoofs of the horses beat,  
Beat into my scalp and my brain,  
With never an end to the stream of passing feet,  
Driving, hurrying, marrying, burying,  
Clamour and rumble, and ringing and clatter,  
And here beneath it is all as bad  
For I thought the dead had peace, but it is not so;  
To have no peace in the grave, is that not sad?  
But up and down and to and fro,  
Ever about me the dead men go;  
And then to hear a dead man chatter  
Is enough to drive one mad.

## 2

Wretchedest age, since Time began,  
They cannot even bury a man;  
And tho' we paid our tithes in the days that are gone,  
Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was read;  
It is that which makes us loud in the world of the dead;  
There is none that does his work, not one;  
A touch of their office might have sufficed,  
But the churchmen fain would kill their church,  
As the churches have kill'd their Christ.

## 3

See, there is one of us sobbing,  
No limit to his distress;  
And another, a lord of all things, praying  
To his own great self, as I guess;  
And another, a statesman there, betraying  
His party-secret, fool, to the press;  
And yonder a vile physician, blabbing  
The case of his patient—all for what?

To tickle the maggot born in an empty head.  
And wheedle a world that loves him not,  
For it is but a world of the dead.

## 4

Nothing but idiot gabble!  
For the prophecy given of old  
And then not understood,  
Has come to pass as foretold;  
Not let any man think for the public good,  
But babble, merely for babble.  
For I never whisper'd a private affair  
Within the hearing of cat or mouse,  
No, not to myself in the closet alone,  
But I heard it shouted at once from the top of the house;  
Everything came to be known:  
Who told *him* we were there?

## 5

Not that gray old wolf, for he came not back  
From the wilderness, full of wolves, where he used to lie;  
He has gather'd the bones for his o'ergrown whelp to  
crack;  
Crack them now for yourself, and howl, and die.

## 6

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,  
And curse me the British vermin, the rat;  
I know not whether he came in the Hanover ship,  
But I know that he lies and listens mute  
In an ancient mansion's crannies and holes:  
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,  
Except that now we poison our babes, poor souls!  
It is all used up for that.

## 7

Tell him now; she is standing here at my head;  
Not beautiful now, not even kind;  
He may take her now; for she never speaks her mind,



But is ever the one thing silent here.  
She is not of us, as I divine;  
She comes from another stiller world of the dead,  
Stiller, not fairer than mine.

## 8

But I know where a garden grows,  
Fairer than aught in the world beside,  
All made up of the lily and rose  
That blow by night, when the season is good,  
To the sound of dancing music and flutes:  
It is only flowers, they had no fruits,  
And I almost fear they are not roses, but blood;  
For the keeper was one, so full of pride,  
He linkt a dead man there to a spectral bride;  
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of brutes,  
Would he have had that hole in his side?

## 9

But what will the old man say?  
He laid a cruel snare in a pit  
To catch a friend of mine one stormy day;  
Yet now I could even weep to think of it;  
For what will the old man say  
When he comes to the second corpse in the pit?

## 10

Friend, to be struck by the public foe,  
Then to strike him and lay him low,  
That were a public merit, far,  
Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin;  
But the red life spilt for a private blow—  
I swear to you, lawful and lawless war  
Are scarcely even akin.

## 11

O me, why have they not buried me deep enough?  
Is it kind to have made me a grave so rough,  
Me, that was never a quiet sleeper?

Maybe still I am but half-dead;  
Then I cannot be wholly dumb:  
I will cry to the steps above my head,  
And somebody, surely, some kind heart will come  
To bury me, bury me  
Deeper, ever so little deeper.

## PART III

## VI

## I

My life has crept so long on a broken wing  
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of horror and fear,  
That I come to be grateful at last for a little thing:  
My mood is changed, for it fell at a time of year  
When the face of night is fair on the dewy downs,  
And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer  
And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns  
Over Orion's grave low down in the west,  
That like a silent lightning under the stars  
She seem'd to divide in a dream from a band of the blest,  
And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars—  
“And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,  
Knowing I tarry for thee,” and pointed to Mars,  
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast.

## 2

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a dear delight  
To have look'd, tho' but in a dream, upon eyes so fair,  
That had been in a weary world my one thing bright;  
And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd my despair  
When I thought that a war would arise in defence of the  
right,  
That an iron tyranny now should bend or cease.  
The glory of manhood stand on his ancient height,  
Nor Britain's one sole God be the millionaire:  
No more shall commerce be all in all, and Peace  
Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid note,  
And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase.

Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a slothful shore,  
And the cobweb woven across the cannon's throat  
Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind no more.

## 3

And as months ran on and rumour of battle grew,  
"It is time, it is time, O passionate heart," said I  
(For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and true),  
"It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,  
That old hysterical mock-disease should die."  
And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd my breath  
With a loyal people shouting a battle-cry,  
Till I saw the dreary phantom arise and fly  
Far into the North, and battle, and seas of death.

## 4

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher aims  
Of a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold,  
And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shames,  
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told;  
And hail once more to the banner of battle unroll'd!  
Tho' many a light shall darken, and many shall weep  
For those that are crush'd in the clash of jarring claims,  
Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd on a giant liar;  
And many a darkness into the light shall leap,  
And shine in the sudden making of splendid names,  
And noble thought be freer under the sun,  
And the heart of a people beat with one desire;  
For the peace, that I deem'd no peace, is over and done,  
And now by the side of the Black and the Baltic deep,  
And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames  
The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.

## 5

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll down like a wind,  
We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are noble still,  
And myself have awaked, as it seems, to the better mind;  
It is better to fight for the good, than to rail at the ill;  
I have felt with my native land, I am one with my kind,  
I embrace the purpose of God, and the doom assign'd.

650

## CROSSING THE BAR

SUNSET and evening star,  
 And one clear call for me!  
 And may there be no moaning of the  
 bar,  
 When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
 Too full for sound and foam,  
 When that which drew from out the  
 boundless deep  
 Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
 And after that the dark!  
 And may there be no sadness of fare-  
 well,  
 When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time  
 and Place  
 The flood may bear me far,  
 I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
 When I have crossed the bar.

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES,  
 LORD HOUGHTON

[1809-1885]

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## SONNET

BECAUSE the Few with signal virtue crowned,  
 The heights and pinnacles of human mind,  
 Sadder and wearier than the rest are found,  
 Wish not thy Soul less wise or less refined.  
 True that the small delights which every day  
 Cheer and distract the pilgrim are not theirs;

True that, though free from passion's lawless sway,  
A loftier being brings severer cares.  
Yet have they special pleasures, even mirth,  
By those undreamt of who have only trod  
Life's valley smooth; and if the rolling earth  
To their nice ear have many a painful tone,  
They know, Man does not live by Joy alone  
But by the presence of the power of God.

## WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

[1811-1863]

652

## THE END OF THE PLAY

THE play is done; the curtain drops,  
Slow falling to the prompter's bell:  
A moment yet the actor stops,  
And looks around, to say farewell.  
It is an irksome word and task;  
And, when he 's laughed and said his say,  
He shows, as he removes the mask,  
A face that 's anything but gay.

One word, ere yet the evening ends,  
Let 's close it with a parting rhyme,  
And pledge a hand to all young friends,  
As fits the merry Christmas-time.  
On life's wide scene you, too, have parts,  
That Fate ere long shall bid you play;  
Good night! with honest gentle hearts  
A kindly greeting go away!

Good night!—I'd say, the griefs, the joys,  
Just hinted in this mimic page,  
The triumphs and defeats of boys,  
Are but repeated in our age.  
I'd say, your woes were not less keen,  
Your hopes more vain than those of men;  
Your pangs or pleasures of fifteen  
At forty-five played o'er again.

I'd say, we suffer and we strive,  
Not less or more as men than boys;  
With grizzled beards at forty-five,  
As erst at twelve in corduroys.  
And if, in time of sacred youth,  
We learned at home to love and pray,  
Pray Heaven that early Love and Truth  
May never wholly pass away.

And in the world, as in the school,  
I'd say, how fate may change and shift;  
The prize be sometimes with the fool,  
The race not always to the swift.  
The strong may yield, the good may fall,  
The great man be a vulgar clown,  
The knave be lifted over all,  
The kind cast pitilessly down.

Who knows the inscrutable design?  
Blessed be He who took and gave!  
Why should your mother, Charles, not mine,  
Be weeping at her darling's grave?  
We bow to Heaven that will'd it so,  
That darkly rules the fate of all.  
That sends the respite or the blow,  
That's free to give, or to recall.

This crowns his feast with wine and wit:  
Who brought him to that mirth and state?  
His betters, see, below him sit,  
Or hunger hopeless at the gate.  
Who bade the mud from Dives' wheel  
To spurn the rags of Lazarus?  
Come, brother, in that dust we'll kneel,  
Confessing Heaven that ruled it thus.

So each shall mourn, in life's advance,  
Dear hopes, dear friends, untimely killed;  
Shall grieve for many a forfeit chance,  
And longing passion unfulfilled.

Amen! whatever fate be sent,  
Pray God the heart may kindly glow,  
Although the head with cares be bent,  
And whitened with the winter snow.

Come wealth or want, come good or ill,  
Let young and old accept their part,  
And bow before the Awful Will,  
And bear it with an honest heart,  
Who misses or who wins the prize.  
Go, lose or conquer as you can;  
But if you fail, or if you rise,  
Be each, pray God, a gentleman.

A gentleman, or old or young!  
(Bear kindly with my humble lays);  
The sacred chorus first was sung  
Upon the first of Christmas Days:  
The shepherds heard it overhead—  
The joyful angels raised it then:  
Glory to Heaven on high, it said.  
And peace on earth to gentle men.

My song, save this, is little worth;  
I lay the weary pen aside,  
And wish you health, and love, and mirth,  
As fits the solemn Christmas-tide.  
As fits the holy Christmas birth,  
Be this, good friends, our carol still—  
Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,  
To men of gentle will.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

[1819-1875]

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AIRLY BEACON

AIRLY Beacon, Airly Beacon;  
O the pleasant sight to see  
Shires and towns from Airly Beacon,  
While my love climb'd up to me!

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;  
O the happy hours we lay  
Deep in fern on Airly Beacon,  
Courting through the summer's day!

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;  
O the weary haunt for me,  
All alone on Airly Beacon,  
With his baby on my knee!

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## THE SANDS OF DEE

'O MARY, go and call the cattle home,  
And call the cattle home,  
And call the cattle home  
Across the sands of Dee';  
The western wind was wild and dank with foam,  
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,  
And o'er and o'er the sand,  
And round and round the sand,  
As far as eye could see.  
The rolling mist came down and hid the land:  
And never home came she.

'Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair,  
A tress of golden hair,  
A drownèd maiden's hair  
Above the nets at sea?  
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair  
Among the stakes of Dee.'

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,  
The cruel crawling foam,  
The cruel hungry foam,  
To her grave beside the sea:  
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home  
Across the sands of Dee.



655

## YOUNG AND OLD

WHEN all the world is young, lad  
And all the trees are green;  
And every goose a swan, lad,  
And every lass a queen;  
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,  
And round the world away;  
Young blood must have its course, lad,  
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,  
And all the trees are brown;  
And all the sport is stale, lad,  
And all the wheels run down:  
Creep home, and take your place there,  
The spent and maimed among:  
God grant you find one face there  
You loved when all was young.

656

## ODE TO THE NORTH-EAST WIND

WELCOME, wild North-easter!  
Shame it is to see  
Odes to every zephyr;  
Ne'er a verse to thee.  
Welcome, black North-easter!  
O'er the German foam;  
O'er the Danish moorlands,  
From thy frozen home.  
Tired we are of summer,  
Tired of gaudy glare  
Showers soft and steaming,  
Hot and breathless air.  
Tired of listless dreaming,  
Through the lazy day:  
Jovial wind of winter  
Turn us out to play!

Sweep the golden reed-beds;  
Crisp the lazy dyke;  
Hunger into madness  
Every plunging pike.  
Fill the lake with wild-fowl;  
Fill the marsh with snipe;  
While on dreary moorlands  
Lonely curlew pipe.  
Through the black fir-forest  
Thunder harsh and dry,  
Shattering down the snow-flakes  
Off the curdled sky.  
Hark! The brave North-easter!  
Breast-high lies the scent,  
On by holt and headland,  
Over heath and bent.  
Chime, ye dappled darlings,  
Through the sleet and snow.  
Who can over-ride you?  
Let the horses go!  
Chime, ye dappled darlings,  
Down the roaring blast  
You shall see a fox die  
Ere an hour be past.  
Go! and rest to-morrow,  
Hunting in your dreams,  
While our skates are ringing  
O'er the frozen streams.  
Let the luscious South-wind  
Breathe in lovers' sighs,  
While the lazy gallants  
Bask in ladies' eyes.  
What does he but soften  
Heart alike and pen?  
'Tis the hard grey weather  
Breeds hard English men.  
What's the soft South-wester?  
'Tis the ladies' breeze,  
Bringing home their true-loves  
Out of all the seas:

But the black North-easter,  
Through the snowstorm hurled,  
Drives our English hearts of oak  
Seaward round the world.  
Come, as came our fathers,  
Heralded by thee,  
Conquering from the eastward,  
Lords by land and sea.  
Come; and strong within us  
Stir the Vikings' blood;  
Bracing brain and sinew;  
Blow, thou wind of God!

J. WILSON (?)

[19th Century]

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## THE CANADIAN BOAT SONG

LISTEN to me, as when ye heard our father  
Sing long ago the song of other shores—  
Listen to me, and then in chorus gather  
All your deep voices as ye pull your oars:  
Fair these broad meads—these hoary woods are grand;  
But we are exiles from our fathers' land.

From the lone shieling of the misty island  
Mountains divide us, and the waste of seas—  
Yet still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland,  
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides:  
Fair these broad meads, &c.

We ne'er shall tread the fancy-haunted valley,  
Where 'tween the dark hills creeps the small clear stream,  
In arms around the patriarch banner rally,  
Nor see the moon on royal tombstones gleam:  
Fair these broad meads, &c.

When the bold kindred, in the time long-vanished,  
 Conquered the soil and fortified the keep,—  
 No seer foretold the children would be banished,  
 That a degenerate Lord might boast his sheep:  
 Fair these broad meads, &c.

Come foreign rage—let Discord burst in slaughter!  
 O then for clansmen true, and stern claymore—  
 The hearts that would have given their blood like water,  
 Beat heavily beyond the Atlantic roar:  
 Fair these broad meads—these hoary woods are grand;  
 But we are exiles from our fathers' land.

## ROBERT BROWNING

[1812—1889]

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## PROSPICE

FEAR death?—to feel the fog in my throat,  
 The mist in my face,  
 When the snows begin, and the blasts denote  
 I am nearing the place,  
 The power of the night, the press of the storm,  
 The post of the foe;  
 Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,  
 Yet the strong man must go:  
 For the journey is done and the summit attained,  
 And the barriers fall,  
 Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,  
 The reward of it all.  
 I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,  
 The best and the last!  
 I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,  
 And bade me creep past.  
 No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers  
 The heroes of old,

Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears  
Of pain, darkness and cold.  
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,  
The black minute's at end,  
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,  
Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,  
Then a light, then thy breast,  
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,  
And with God be the rest!

659 'HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM  
GHENT TO AIX' [16—]

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;  
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;  
'Good speed!' cried the watch, as the gate-bolts undrew;  
'Speed!' echoed the wall to us galloping through;  
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,  
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great pace  
Neck by neck, stride by stride; never changing our place;  
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,  
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,  
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,  
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting; but while we drew near  
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear;  
At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see;  
At Düffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be;  
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-chime,  
So Joris broke silence with 'Yet there is time!'

At Aerschot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,  
And against him the cattle stood black every one,

To stare through the mist at us galloping past,  
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,  
With resolute shoulders, each butting away  
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back  
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;  
And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance  
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance!  
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon  
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Joris, 'Stay spur!  
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,  
We'll remember at Aix'—for one heard the quick wheeze  
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering knees,  
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,  
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,  
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky:  
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,  
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff;  
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,  
And 'Gallop', gasped Joris, 'for Aix is in sight!'

'How they'll greet us!'—and all in a moment his roan  
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone:  
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight  
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,  
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,  
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,  
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,  
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,  
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer:  
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or good,  
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is, friends flocking round  
 As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground;  
 And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,  
 As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,  
 Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)  
 Was no more than his due who brought good news from  
 Ghent.

660

## THE LOST LEADER

Just for a handful of silver he left us,  
 Just for a riband to stick in his coat—  
 Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,  
 Lost all the others she lets us devote;  
 They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,  
 So much was theirs who so little allowed:  
 How all our copper had gone for his service!  
 Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud!  
 We that had loved him so, followed him, honoured him,  
 Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,  
 Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,  
 Made him our pattern to live and to die!  
 Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,  
 Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from their  
 graves!  
 He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,  
 He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!

We shall march prospering,—not through his presence;  
 Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;  
 Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,  
 Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire:  
 Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,  
 One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,  
 One more triumph for devils and sorrow for angels,  
 One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!  
 Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!  
 There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,  
 Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,  
 Never glad confident morning again!

Best fight on well, for we taught him,—strike gallantly,  
 Menace our heart ere we master his own;  
 Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,  
 Pardoned in Heaven, the first by the throne!

## 661

## HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

O, to be in England  
 Now that April's there,  
 And whoever wakes in England  
 Sees, some morning, unaware,  
 That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf  
 Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,  
 While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough  
 In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,  
 And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!  
 Hark, where my blossom'd pear-tree in the hedge  
 Leans to the field and scatters on the clover  
 Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—  
 That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,  
 Lest you should think he never could recapture  
 The first fine careless rapture!  
 And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,  
 All will be gay when noontide wakes anew  
 The buttercups, the little children's dower  
 —Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

## 662

## HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the North-west died  
 away;  
 Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay;  
 Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;  
 In the dimmest North-east distance dawn'd Gibraltar grand  
 and gray;



‘Here and here did England help me: how can I help  
England?’—say,  
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and  
pray,  
While Jove’s planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

663

## PARTING AT MORNING

ROUND the cape of a sudden came the sea,  
And the sun look’d over the mountain’s rim:  
And straight was a path of gold for him,  
And the need of a world of men for me.

664

## THE LOST MISTRESS

ALL’S over, then: does truth sound bitter  
As one at first believes?  
Hark, ’tis the sparrows’ good-night twitter  
About your cottage eaves!

And the leaf-buds on the vine are woolly,  
I noticed that, to-day;  
One day more bursts them open fully  
—You know the red turns gray.

To-morrow we meet the same then, dearest?  
May I take your hand in mine?  
Mere friends are we,—well, friends the merest  
Keep much that I resign:

For each glance of the eye so bright and black,  
Though I keep with heart’s endeavour,—  
Your voice, when you wish the snowdrops back,  
Though it stay in my soul for ever!—

Yet I will but say what mere friends say,  
Or only a thought stronger;  
I will hold your hand but as long as all may,  
Or so very little longer!

I SAID—Then, dearest, since 'tis so,  
 Since now at length my fate I know,  
 Since nothing all my love avails,  
 Since all, my life seem'd meant for, fails,  
     Since this was written and needs must be—  
 My whole heart rises up to bless  
 Your name in pride and thankfulness!  
 Take back the hope you gave,—I claim  
 Only a memory of the same,  
 —And this beside, if you will not blame;  
     Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers,  
 Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs  
 When pity would be softening through,  
 Fix'd me a breathing-while or two  
     With life or death in the balance: right!  
 The blood replenish'd me again;  
 My last thought was at least not vain:  
 I and my mistress, side by side  
 Shall be together, breathe and ride,  
 So, one day more am I deified.  
     Who knows but the world may end to-night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud  
 All billowy-bosom'd, over-bow'd  
 By many benedictions—sun's  
 And moon's and evening-star's at once—  
     And so, you, looking and loving best,  
 Conscious grew, your passion drew  
 Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,  
 Down on you, near and yet more near,  
 Till flesh must fade for heaven was here!—  
 Thus leant she and linger'd—joy and fear!  
     Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul  
 Smooth'd itself out, a long-cramp'd scroll

Freshening and fluttering in the wind.  
Past hopes already lay behind.

What need to strive with a life awry?  
Had I said that, had I done this,  
So might I gain, so might I miss.  
Might she have loved me? just as well  
She might have hated, who can tell!  
Where had I been now if the worst befell?  
And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?  
Why, all men strive and who succeeds?  
We rode; it seem'd my spirit flew,  
Saw other regions, cities new,  
As the world rush'd by on either side.  
I thought,—All labour, yet no less  
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.  
Look at the end of work, contrast  
The petty done, the undone vast,  
This present of theirs with the hopeful past!  
I hoped she would love me; here we ride.

What hand and brain went ever pair'd?  
What heart alike conceived and dared?  
What act proved all its thought had been?  
What will but felt the fleshly screen?  
We ride and I see her bosom heave.  
There's many a crown for who can reach.  
Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!  
The flag stuck on a heap of bones,  
A soldier's doing! what atones?  
They scratch his name on the Abbey-stones.  
My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,  
Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell  
What we felt only; you express'd  
You hold things beautiful the best,  
And pace them in rhyme so, side by side.  
'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,

Have you yourself what's best for men?  
 Are you—poor, sick, old ere your time—  
 Nearer one whit your own sublime  
 Than we who never have turn'd a rhyme?  
     Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor—so, you gave  
 A score of years to Art, her slave,  
 And that's your Venus, whence we turn  
 To yonder girl that fords the burn!

    You acquiesce, and shall I repine?  
 What, man of music, you grown gray  
 With notes and nothing else to say,  
 Is this your sole praise from a friend,  
 'Greatly his opera's strains intend,  
 Put in music we know how fashions end!'

    I gave my youth: but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate  
 Proposed bliss here should sublimate  
 My being—had I sign'd the bond—  
 Still one must lead some life beyond,

    Have a bliss to die with, dim-described.  
 This foot once planted on the goal,  
 This glory-garland round my soul,  
 Could I descry such? Try and test!  
 I sink back shuddering from the quest.  
 Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?

    Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet—she has not spoke so long!  
 What if heaven be that, fair and strong  
 At life's best, with our eyes upturn'd  
 Whither life's flower is first discern'd,

    We, fix'd so, ever should so abide?  
 What if we still ride on, we two  
 With life for ever old yet new,  
 Changed not in kind but in degree,  
 The instant made eternity,—  
 And heaven just prove that I and she  
     Ride, ride together, for ever ride?

666

## PIPPA'S SONG

THE year's at the spring,  
And day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hill-side's dew-pearl'd;  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn;  
God's in His heaven—  
All's right with the world!

667

## YOU'LL LOVE ME YET

YOU'LL love me yet!—and I can tarry  
Your love's protracted growing:  
June rear'd that bunch of flowers you carry,  
From seeds of April's sowing.

I plant a heartful now: some seed  
At least is sure to strike,  
And yield—what you'll not pluck indeed,  
Not love, but, may be, like.

You'll look at least on love's remains,  
A grave's one violet:  
Your look?—that pays a thousand pains.  
What's death? You'll love me yet!

668

## MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

THAT's my last Duchess painted on the wall,  
Looking as if she were alive. I call  
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands  
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.  
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said  
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read

Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
But to myself they turned (since none puts by  
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)  
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,  
How such a glance came there; so, not the first  
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not  
Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps  
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps  
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint  
Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such stuff  
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough  
For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad.  
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er  
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.  
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,  
The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
The bough of cherries some officious fool  
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
She rode with round the terrace—all and each  
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,  
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but  
thanked

Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked  
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame  
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill  
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will  
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this  
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,  
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let  
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set  
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,  
—E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose  
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,  
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without  
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;

Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands  
 As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet  
 The company below, then. I repeat,  
 The Count your master's known munificence  
 Is ample warrant that no just pretence  
 Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
 Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed  
 At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
 Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,  
 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
 Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

669

THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB AT  
 SAINT PRAXED'S CHURCH

*Rome, 15—*

VANITY, saith the preacher, vanity!  
 Draw round my bed: is Anselm keeping back?  
 Nephews—sons mine . . . ah God, I know not? Well—  
 She, men would have to be your mother once,  
 Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!  
 What's done is done, and she is dead beside,  
 Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,  
 And as she died so must we die ourselves,  
 And thence ye may perceive the world's a dream.  
 Life, how and what is it? As here I lie  
 In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,  
 Hours and long hours in the dead night, I ask  
 "Do I live, am I dead?" Peace, peace seems all.  
 Saint Praxed's ever was the church for peace;  
 And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought  
 With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye know:  
 —Old Gandolf cozened me, despite my care;  
 Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner South  
 He graced his carrion with, God curse the same!  
 Yet still my niche is not so cramped but thence  
 One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,  
 And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats,  
 And up into the very dome where live

The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk:  
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,  
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,  
With those nine columns round me, two and two,  
The odd one at my feet where Anselm stands:  
Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe  
As fresh poured red wine of a mighty pulse  
—Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-stone,  
Put me where I may look at him! True peach,  
Rosy and flawless: how I earned the prize!  
Draw close: that conflagration of my church  
—What then? So much was saved if aught were missed!  
My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig  
The white-grape vineyard where the oil-press stood,  
Drop water gently till the surface sink,  
And if ye find . . . Ah God, I know not, I! . . .  
Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft,  
And corded up in a tight olive-frail,  
Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,  
Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,  
Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast  
Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all,  
That brave Frascati villa with its bath,  
So, let the blue lump poise between my knees,  
Like God the Father's globe on both his hands  
Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,  
For Gandolf shall not choose but see and burst!  
Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years:  
Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?  
Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black—  
'Twas ever antique-black I meant! How else  
Shall ye contrast my frieze to come beneath?  
The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me.  
Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and perchance  
Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,  
The Saviour at his sermon on the mount,  
Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan  
Ready to twitch the Nymph's last garment off,  
And Moses with the tables . . . but I know  
Ye mark me not! What do they whisper thee,



Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope  
To revel down my villas while I gasp  
Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy travertine  
Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles at!  
Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper, then!  
'Tis jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve  
My bath must needs be left behind, alas!  
One block, pure green as a pistachio-nut,  
There's plenty jasper somewhere in the world—  
And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray  
Horses for ye, and brown Greek manuscripts,  
And mistresses with great smooth marbly limbs?  
—That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,  
Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's every word,  
No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line—  
Tully, my masters? Ulpian serves his need!  
And then how I shall lie through centuries,  
And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,  
And see God made and eaten all day long,  
And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste  
Good strong thick stupefying incense-smoke!  
For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,  
Dying in state and by such slow degrees,  
I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,  
And stretch my feet forth straight as stone can point,  
And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop  
Into great laps and folds of sculptor's work:  
And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange thoughts  
Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,  
About the life before I lived this life,  
And this life too, popes, cardinals and priests,  
Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount,  
Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,  
And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,  
And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,  
—Aha, ELUCESCEBAT quoth our friend?  
No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!  
Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.  
All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope  
My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?

Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,  
 They glitter like your mother's for my soul,  
 Or ye would heighten my impoverished frieze,  
 Piece out its starved design, and fill my vase  
 With grapes, and add a visor and a Term,  
 And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx  
 That in his struggle throws the thyrsus down,  
 To comfort me on my entablature  
 Whereon I am to lie till I must ask  
 "Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave me, there!  
 For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude  
 To death—ye wish it—God, ye wish it! Stone—  
 Gritstone, a-crumble! Clammy squares which sweat  
 As if the corpse they keep were oozing through—  
 And no more *lapis* to delight the world!  
 Well, go! I bless ye. Fewer tapers there,  
 But in a row: and, going, turn your backs  
 —Ay, like departing altar-ministrants,  
 And leave me in my church, the church for peace,  
 That I may watch at leisure if he leers—  
 Old Gandolf—at me, from his onion-stone,  
 As still he envied me, so fair she was!

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead!  
 Sit and watch by her side an hour.  
 That is her book-shelf, this her bed;  
 She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,  
 Beginning to die too, in the glass;  
 Little has yet been changed, I think:  
 The shutters are shut, no light may pass  
 Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!  
 Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;  
 It was not her time to love; beside,  
 Her life had many a hope and aim,

Duties enough and little cares,  
And now was quiet, now astir,  
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,—  
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?  
What, your soul was pure and true,  
The good stars met in your horoscope,  
Made you of spirit, fire and dew—  
And, just because I was thrice as old  
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,  
Each was naught to each, must I be told?  
We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above  
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,  
And creates the love to reward the love:  
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!  
Delayed it may be for more lives yet,  
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few:  
Much is to learn, much to forget  
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come—at last it will,  
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)  
In the lower earth, in the years long still,  
That body and soul so pure and gay?  
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,  
And your mouth of your own geranium's red—  
And what you would do with me, in fine,  
In the new life come in the old life's stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,  
Given up myself so many times,  
Gained me the gains of various men,  
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;  
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,  
Either I missed or itself missed me:  
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!  
What is the issue? Let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while!  
 My heart seemed full as it could hold;  
 There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,  
 And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.  
 So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep:  
 See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand!  
 There, that is our secret: go to sleep!  
 You will wake, and remember, and understand.

671

## A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI'S

OH Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad to find!  
 I can hardly misconceive you; it would prove me deaf and  
 blind;  
 But although I take your meaning, 'tis with such a heavy  
 mind!

Here you come with your old music, and here's all the  
 good it brings.  
 What, they lived once thus at Venice where the merchants  
 were the kings,  
 Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges used to wed the sea  
 with rings?

Ay, because the sea's the street there, and 'tis arched by  
 . . . what you call  
 . . . Shylock's bridge with houses on it, where they kept  
 the carnival:  
 I was never out of England—it's as if I saw it all.

Did young people take their pleasure when the sea was  
 warm in May?  
 Balls and masks begun at midnight, burning ever to mid-day,  
 When they made up fresh adventures for the morrow, do you  
 say?

Was a lady such a lady, cheeks so round and lips so red,—  
 On her neck the small face buoyant, like a bell-flower on  
 its bed,  
 O'er the breast's superb abundance where a man might base  
 his head?

Well, and it was graceful of them—they'd break talk off  
and afford  
—She, to bite her mask's black velvet—he, to finger on his  
sword,  
While you sat and played Toccatas, stately at the clavi-  
chord?

What? Those lesser thirds so plaintive, sixths diminished,  
sigh on sigh,  
Told them something? Those suspensions, those solutions—  
“Must we die?”  
Those commiserating sevenths—“Life might last! we can  
but try!”

“Were you happy?”—“Yes.”—“And are you still as  
happy?”—“Yes. And you?”  
—“Then, more kisses!”—“Did *I* stop them, when a million  
seemed so few?”  
Hark, the dominant's persistence till it must be answered to!

So, an octave struck the answer. Oh, they praised you, I  
dare say!  
“Brave Galuppi! that was music! good alike at grave and  
gay!  
I can always leave off talking when I hear a master play!”

Then they left you for their pleasure: till in due time, one  
by one,  
Some with lives that came to nothing, some with deeds as  
well undone,  
Death stepped tacitly and took them where they never see  
the sun.

But when I sit down to reason, think to take my stand nor  
swerve,  
While I triumph o'er a secret wrung from nature's close  
reserve,  
In you come with your cold music till I creep through every  
nerve.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creaking where a house  
was burned:

"Dust and ashes, dead and done with, Venice spent what  
Venice earned.

The soul, doubtless, is immortal—where a soul can be dis-  
cerned.

"Yours for instance: you know physics, something of  
geology,

Mathematics are your pastime; souls shall rise in their  
degree;

Butterflies may dread extinction,—you'll not die, it cannot  
be!

"As for Venice and her people, merely born to bloom and  
drop,

Here on earth they bore their fruitage, mirth and folly  
were the crop:

What of soul was left, I wonder, when the kissing had to  
stop?

"Dust and ashes!" So you creak it, and I want the heart  
to scold.

Dear dear women, with such hair, too—what's become of  
all the gold

Used to hang and brush their bosoms? I feel chilly and  
grown old.

АН, did you once see Shelley plain,  
And did he stop and speak to you,  
And did you speak to him again?  
How strange it seems and new!

But you were living before that,  
And also you are living after;  
And the memory I started at—  
My starting moves your laughter!

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own  
And a certain use in the world no doubt,  
Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone  
'Mid the blank miles round about:

For there I picked up on the heather  
And there I put inside my breast  
A moulted feather, an eagle-feather!  
Well, I forget the rest.

673

## THE PATRIOT

## AN OLD STORY

It was roses, roses, all the way,  
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad:  
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,  
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,  
A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells,  
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.  
Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise repels—  
But give me your sun from yonder skies!"  
They had answered, "And afterward, what else?"

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun  
To give it my loving friends to keep!  
Naught man could do, have I left undone:  
And you see my harvest, what I reap  
This very day, now a year is run.

There's nobody on the house-tops now—  
Just a palsied few at the windows set;  
For the best of the sight is, all allow,  
At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,  
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,  
 A rope cuts both my wrists behind;  
 And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,  
 For they fling, whoever has a mind,  
 Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go!  
 In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.  
 "Paid by the world, what dost thou owe  
 Me?"—God might question; now instead,  
 'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so.

674

## A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING IN EUROPE

LET us begin and carry up this corpse,  
 Singing together.  
 Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar thorpes  
 Each in its tether  
 Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,  
 Cared-for till cock-crow:  
 Look out if yonder be not day again  
 Rimming the rock-row!  
 That's the appropriate country; there, man's thought,  
 Rarer, intenser,  
 Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,  
 Chafes in the censer.  
 Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and crop:  
 Seek we sepulture  
 On a tall mountain, citied to the top,  
 Crowded with culture!  
 All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels;  
 Clouds overcome it;  
 No! yonder sparkle is the citadel's  
 Circling its summit.  
 Thither our path lies; wind we up the heights;  
 Wait ye the warning?  
 Our low life was the level's and the night's:  
 He's for the morning.



Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head,  
'Ware the beholders!  
This is our master, famous, calm and dead,  
Borne on our shoulders.

Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling thorpe and  
croft,

Safe from the weather!

He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,

Singing together,

He was a man born with thy face and throat,

Lyric Apollo!

Long he lived nameless: how should Spring take  
note

Winter would follow?

Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone!

Cramped and diminished,

Moaned he, "New measures, other feet anon!

My dance is finished?"

No, that's the world's way: (keep the mountain-  
side,

Make for the city!)

He knew the signal, and stepped on with pride

Over men's pity;

Left play for work, and grappled with the world

Bent on escaping:

"What's in the scroll," quoth he, "thou keepest  
furled?

Show me their shaping,

Theirs who most studied man, the bard and  
sage,—

Give!"—So, he gowned him,

Straight got by heart that book to its last page:

Learned, we found him.

Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like lead,

Accents uncertain:

"Time to taste life," another would have said,

"Up with the curtain!"

This man said rather, "Actual life comes next?

Patience a moment!

Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed text,  
 Still there's the comment.  
 Let me know all! Prate not of most or least,  
 Painful or easy!  
 Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,  
 Ay, nor feel queasy."  
 Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,  
 When he had learned it,  
 When he had gathered all books had to give!  
 Sooner, he spurned it.  
 Image the whole, then execute the parts—  
 Fancy the fabric  
 Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from  
 quartz,  
 Ere mortar dab brick!

(Here's the town-gate reached: there's the  
 market-place  
 Gaping before us.)  
 Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace  
 (Hearten our chorus!)  
 That before living he'd learn how to live—  
 No end to learning:  
 Earn the means first—God surely will contrive  
 Use for our earning.  
 Others mistrust and say, "But time escapes:  
 Live now or never!"  
 He said, "What's time? Leave Now for dogs and  
 apes!  
 Man has Forever."  
 Back to his book then: deeper drooped his head:  
*Calculus* racked him:  
 Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead:  
*Tussis* attacked him.  
 "Now, master, take a little rest!"—not he!  
 (Caution redoubled,  
 Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly!)  
 Not a whit troubled,  
 Back to his studies, fresher than at **first**,  
 Fierce as a dragon

He (soul-hydroptic with a sacred thirst)  
Sucked at the flagon.  
Oh, if we draw a circle premature,  
Heedless of far gain,  
Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure  
Bad is our bargain!  
Was it not great? did not he throw on God,  
(He loves the burthen)—  
God's task to make the heavenly period  
Perfect the earthen?  
Did not he magnify the mind, show clear  
Just what it all meant?  
He would not discount life, as fools do here,  
Paid by instalment.  
He ventured neck or nothing—heaven's success  
Found, or earth's failure:  
“Wilt thou trust death or not?” He answered  
“Yes!  
Hence with life's pale lure!”  
That low man seeks a little thing to do,  
Sees it and does it:  
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,  
Dies ere he knows it.  
That low man goes on adding one to one,  
His hundred's soon hit:  
This high man, aiming at a million,  
Misses an unit.  
That, has the world here—should he need the  
next,  
Let the world mind him!  
This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed  
Seeking shall find him.  
So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,  
Ground he at grammar;  
Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were  
rife:  
While he could stammer  
He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be!—  
Properly based *Oun*—  
Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,

Dead from the waist down.  
 Well, here's the platform, here's the proper place:  
 Hail to your purlieus,  
 All ye highfliers of the feathered race,  
 Swallows and curlews!  
 Here's the top-peak; the multitude below  
 Live, for they can, there:  
 This man decided not to Live but Know—  
 Bury this man there?  
 Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot,  
       clouds form,  
 . Lightnings are loosened,  
 Stars come and go! Let joy break with the  
       storm,  
 Peace let the dew send!  
 Lofty designs must close in like effects:  
 Loftily lying,  
 Leave him—still loftier than the world suspects,  
 Living and dying.

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ANDREA DEL SARTO

CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

BUT do not let us quarrel any more,  
 No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:  
 Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.  
 You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?  
 I'll work then for your friend's friend, never fear,  
 Treat his own subject after his own way,  
 Fix his own time, accept too his own price,  
 And shut the money into this small hand  
 When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?  
 Oh, I'll content him,—but to-morrow, Love!  
 I often am much wearier than you think,  
 This evening more than usual, and it seems  
 As if—forgive now—should you let me sit  
 Here by the window with your hand in mine  
 And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,  
 Both of one mind, as married people use,

Quietly, quietly the evening through,  
I might get up to-morrow to my work  
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.  
To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this!  
Your soft hand is a woman of itself,  
And mine the man's bared breast she curls inside.  
Don't count the time lost, neither; you must serve  
For each of the five pictures we require:  
It saves a model. So! keep looking so—  
My serpentining beauty, rounds on rounds!  
—How could you ever prick those perfect ears,  
Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet—  
My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,  
Which everybody looks on and calls his,  
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,  
While she looks—no one's: very dear, no less.  
You smile? why, there's my picture ready made,  
There's what we painters call our harmony!  
A common grayness silvers everything,—  
All in a twilight, you and I alike  
—You, at the point of your first pride in me  
(That's gone you know),—but I, at every point;  
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down  
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.  
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top;  
That length of convent-wall across the way  
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;  
The last monk leaves the garden; days decrease,  
And autumn grows, autumn in everything,  
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape  
As if I saw alike my work and self  
And all that I was born to be and do,  
A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's hand.  
How strange now looks the life he makes us lead;  
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!  
I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!  
This chamber for example—turn your head—  
All that's behind us! You don't understand  
Nor care to understand about my art,  
But you can hear at least when people speak:

And that cartoon, the second from the door  
—It is the thing, Love! so such things should be—  
Behold Madonna!—I am bold to say.  
I can do with my pencil what I know,  
What I see, what at bottom of my heart  
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep—  
Do easily, too—when I say, perfectly,  
I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are judge,  
Who listened to the Legate's talk last week,  
And just as much they used to say in France.  
At any rate 't is easy, all of it!  
No sketches first, no studies, that's long past:  
I do what many dream of all their lives,  
—Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do,  
And fail in doing. I could count twenty such  
On twice your fingers, and not leave this town,  
Who strive—you don't know how the others strive  
To paint a little thing like that you smeared  
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat,—  
Yet do much less, so much less, Someone says,  
(I know his name, no matter)—so much less!  
Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.  
There burns a truer light of God in them,  
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain,  
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt  
This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.  
Their works drop groundward, but themselves, I know,  
Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me,  
Enter and take their place there sure enough,  
Though they come back and cannot tell the world.  
My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.  
The sudden blood of these men! at a word—  
Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils too.  
I, painting from myself and to myself,  
Know what I do, am unmoved by men's blame  
Or their praise either. Somebody remarks  
Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,  
His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,  
Rightly traced and well ordered; what of that?  
Speak as they please, what does the mountain care?

Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,  
Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-gray  
Placid and perfect with my art: the worse!  
I know both what I want and what might gain,  
And yet how profitless to know, to sigh  
"Had I been two, another and myself,  
Our head would have o'erlooked the world!" No doubt  
Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth  
The Urbinate who died five years ago.  
( 'Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)  
Well, I can fancy how he did it all,  
Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,  
Reaching, that heaven might so replenish him,  
Above and through his art—for it gives way;  
That arm is wrongly put—and there again—  
A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,  
Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,  
He means right—that, a child may understand.  
Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:  
But all the play, the insight and the stretch—  
Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?  
Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,  
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!  
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think—  
More than I merit, yes, by many times.  
But had you—oh, with the same perfect brow,  
And perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth,  
And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird  
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare—  
Had you, with these the same, but brought a mind!  
Some women do so. Had the mouth there urged  
"God and the glory! never care for gain,  
The present by the future, what is that?  
Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!  
Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"  
I might have done it for you. So it seems:  
Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.  
Beside, incentives come from the soul's self;  
The rest avail not. Why do I need you?  
What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?



In this world, who can do a thing, will not;  
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:  
Yet the will's somewhat—somewhat, too, the power—  
And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,  
God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.  
'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,  
That I am something underrated here,  
Poor this long while, despised, to speak the truth.  
I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,  
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.  
The best is when they pass and look aside;  
But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.  
Well may they speak! That Francis, that first time,  
And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!  
I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,  
Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,  
In that humane great monarch's golden look,—  
One finger in his beard or twisted curl  
Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,  
One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,  
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,  
I painting proudly with his breath on me,  
All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,  
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls  
Profuse, my hand kept plying by those hearts,—  
And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,  
This in the background, waiting on my work,  
To crown the issue with a last reward!  
A good time, was it not, my kingly days?  
And had you not grown restless . . . but I know—  
'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct said;  
Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,  
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt  
Out of the grange whose four walls make his world.  
How could it end in any other way?  
You called me, and I came home to your heart.  
The triumph was—to reach and stay there; since  
I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?  
Let my hands frame your face in your hair's gold.  
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!



"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;  
The Roman's is the better when you pray,  
But still the other's Virgin was his wife"—  
Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge  
Both pictures in your presence; clearer grows  
My better fortune, I resolve to think  
For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,  
Said one day Agnolo, his very self,  
To Rafael . . . I have known it all these years . . .  
(When the young man was flaming out his thoughts  
Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,  
Too lifted up in heart because of it)  
"Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub  
Goes up and down our Florence, none cares how,  
Who, were he set to plan and execute  
As you are, pricked on by your popes and kings,  
Would bring the sweat into that brow of yours!"  
To Rafael's!—And indeed the arm is wrong.  
I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,  
Give the chalk here—quick, thus the line should go!  
Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!  
Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,  
(What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?  
Do you forget already words like those?)  
If really there was such a chance, so lost,—  
Is, whether you're—not grateful—but more pleased.  
Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed!  
This hour has been an hour! Another smile?  
If you would sit thus by me every night  
I should work better, do you comprehend?  
I mean that I should earn more, give you more.  
See, it is settled dusk now; there's a star;  
Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the wall,  
The cue-owls speak the name we call them by.  
Come from the window, love,—come in, at last.  
Inside the melancholy little house  
We built to be so gay with. God is just.  
King Francis may forgive me: oft at nights  
When I look up from painting, eyes tired out,  
The walls become illumined, brick from brick

Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,  
That gold of his I did cement them with!  
Let us but love each other. Must you go?  
That Cousin here again? he waits outside?  
Must see you—you, and not with me? Those loans?  
More gaming debts to pay? you smiled for that?  
Well, let smiles buy me! have you more to spend?  
While hand and eye and something of a heart  
Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it worth?  
I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit  
The gray remainder of the evening out,  
Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly  
How I could paint, were I but back in France,  
One picture, just one more—the Virgin's face.  
Not yours this time! I want you at my side  
To hear them—that is, Michel Agnolo—  
Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.  
Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your friend.  
I take the subjects for his corridor,  
Finish the portrait out of hand—there, there,  
And throw him in another thing or two  
If he demurs; the whole should prove enough  
To pay for this same Cousin's freak. Beside,  
What's better and what's all I care about,  
Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!  
Love, does that please you? Ah, but what does he,  
The Cousin, what does he to please you more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.  
I regret little, I would change still less.  
Since there my past life lies, why alter it?  
The very wrong to Francis!—it is true  
I took his coin, was tempted and complied,  
And built this house and sinned, and all is said.  
My father and my mother died of want.  
Well, had I riches my own? you see  
How one gets rich! Let each one bear his lot.  
They were born poor, lived poor, and poor they died;  
And I have labored somewhat in my time  
And not been paid profusely. Some good son

Paint my two hundred pictures—let him try!  
 No doubt, there's something strikes a balance. Yes.  
 You loved me quite enough, it seems to-night.  
 This must suffice me here. What would one have?  
 In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance—  
 Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,  
 Meted on each side by the angels reed,  
 For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo and me  
 To cover—the three first without a wife,  
 While I have mine! So—still they overcome  
 Because there's still Lucrezia,—as I choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my Love.

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## ONE WORD MORE

TO E. B. B.

*London, September, 1855*

## I

THERE they are, my fifty men and women  
 Naming me the fifty poems finished!  
 Take them, Love, the book and me together:  
 Where the heart lies, let the brain lie also.

## II

Rafael made a century of sonnets,  
 Made and wrote them in a certain volume  
 Dinted with the silver-pointed pencil  
 Else he only used to draw Madonnas:  
 These, the world might view—but one, the volume.  
 Who that one, you ask? Your heart instructs you.  
 Did she live and love it all her lifetime?  
 Did she drop, his lady of the sonnets,  
 Die, and let it drop beside her pillow  
 Where it lay in place of Rafael's glory,

Rafael's cheek so duteous and so loving,  
Cheek, the world was wont to hail a painter's,  
Rafael's cheek, her love had turned a poet's?

## III

You and I would rather read that volume,  
(Taken to his beating bosom by it)  
Lean and list the bosom-beats of Rafael,  
Would we not? than wonder at Madonnas—  
Her, San Sisto names, and Her, Foligno,  
Her, that visits Florence in a vision,  
Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre—  
Seen by us and all the world in circle.

## IV

You and I will never read that volume.  
Guido Reni, like his own eye's apple  
Guarded long the treasure-book and loved it.  
Guido Reni dying, all Bologna  
Cried, and the world cried too, "Ours, the treasure!"  
Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished.

## V

Dante once prepared to paint an angel:  
Whom to please? You whisper "Beatrice."  
While he mused and traced it and retraced it,  
(Peradventure with a pen corroded  
Still by drops of that hot ink he dipped for,  
When, his left-hand i' the hair o' the wicked,  
Back he held the brow and pricked its stigma,  
Bit into the live man's flesh for parchment,  
Loosed him, laughed to see the writing rankle,  
Let the wretch go festering through Florence)—  
Dante, who loved well because he hated,  
Hated wickedness that hinders loving,  
Dante standing, studying his angel,—  
In there broke the folk of his Inferno.

Says he—"Certain people of importance"  
(Such he gave his daily dreadful line to)  
"Entered and would seize, forsooth, the poet."  
Says the poet—"Then I stopped my painting."

## VI

You and I would rather see that angel,  
Painted by the tenderness of Dante,  
Would we not?—than read a fresh Inferno.

## VII

You and I will never see that picture.  
While he mused on love and Beatrice,  
While he softened o'er his outlined angel,  
In they broke, those "people of importance:"  
We and Bice bear the loss forever.

## VIII

What of Rafael's sonnets, Dante's picture?  
This: no artist lives and loves, that longs not  
Once, and only once, and for one only,  
(Ah, the prize!) to find his love a language  
Fit and fair and simple and sufficient—  
Using nature that's an art to others,  
Not, this one time, art that's turned his nature,  
Ay, of all the artists living, loving,  
None but would forego his proper dowry,—  
Does he paint? he fain would write a poem,—  
Does he write? he fain would paint a picture,  
Put to proof art alien to the artist's,  
Once, and only once, and for one only,  
So to be the man and leave the artist,  
Gain the man's joy, miss the artist's sorrow.

## IX

Wherefore? Heaven's gift takes earth's abatement!  
He who smites the rock and spreads the water,  
Bidding drink and live a crowd beneath him,  
Even he, the minute makes immortal,

Proves, perchance, but mortal in the minute.  
 Desecrates, belike, the deed in doing.  
 While he smites, how can he but remember,  
 So he smote before, in such a peril,  
 When they stood and mocked—"Shall smiting help us?  
 When they drank and sneered—"A stroke is easy!"  
 When they wiped their mouths and went their journey,  
 Throwing him for thanks—"But drought was pleasant"  
 Thus old memories mar the actual triumph;  
 Thus the doing savors of disrelish;  
 Thus achievement lacks a gracious somewhat;  
 O'er-importuned brows becloud the mandate,  
 Carelessness or consciousness—the gesture.  
 For he bears an ancient wrong about him,  
 Sees and knows again those phalanxed faces,  
 Hears, yet one time more, the 'customed prelude—  
 "How shouldst thou, of all men, smite, and save us?"  
 Guesses what is like to prove the sequel—  
 "Egypt's flesh pots—nay, the drought was better."

## X

Oh, the crowd must have emphatic warrant!  
 Theirs, the Sinai-forehead's cloven brilliance,  
 Right-arm's rod-sweep, tongue's imperial fiat.  
 Never dares the man put off the prophet.

## XI

Did he love one face from out the thousands,  
 (Were she Jethro's daughter, white and wifely,  
 Were she but the Æthiopian bondslave),  
 He would envy yon dumb patient camel,  
 Keeping a reserve of scanty water  
 Meant to save his own life in the desert;  
 Ready in the desert to deliver  
 (Kneeling down to let his breast be opened)  
 Hoard and life together for his mistress.

## XII

I shall never, in the years remaining,  
Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you statues,  
Make you music that should all-express me;  
So it seems: I stand on my attainment.  
This of verse alone, one life allows me;  
Verse and nothing else have I to give you.  
Other heights in other lives, God willing:  
All the gifts from all the heights, your own, Love!

## XIII

Yet a semblance of resource avails us—  
Shade so finely touched, love's sense must seize it.  
Take these lines, look lovingly and nearly,  
Lines I write the first time and the last time.  
He who works in fresco, steals a hairbrush,  
Curbs the liberal hand, subservient proudly,  
Cramps his spirit, crowds its all in little,  
Makes a strange art of an art familiar,  
Fills his lady's missal-marge with flowerets.  
He who blows through bronze, may breathe through silver,  
Fity serenade a slumbrous princess.  
He who writes, may write for once as I do.

## XIV

Love, you saw me gather men and women,  
Live or dead or fashioned by my fancy,  
Enter each and all, and use their service,  
Speak from every mouth,—the speech, a poem.  
Hardly shall I tell my joys and sorrows,  
Hope and fears, belief and disbelieving:  
I am mine and yours—the rest be all men's,  
Karshish, Cleon, Norbert, and the fifty,  
Let me speak this once in my true person,  
Not as Lippo, Roland, or Andrea,  
Though the fruit of speech be just this sentence:

Pray you, look on these my men and women,  
 Take and keep my fifty poems finished;  
 Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also!  
 Poor the speech; be how I speak, for all things.

## XV

Not but that you know me! Lo, the moon's self!  
 Here in London, yonder late in Florence,  
 Still we find her face, the thrice-transfigured,  
 Curving on a sky imbrued with color,  
 Drifted over Fiesole by twilight,  
 Came she, our new crescent of a hair's-breadth.  
 Full she flared it, lamping Samminiato,  
 Rounder 'twixt the cypresses and rounder,  
 Perfect till the nightingales applauded.  
 Now, a piece of her old self, impoverished,  
 Hard to greet, she traverses the houseroofs,  
 Hurries with unhandsome thrift of silver,  
 Goes dispiritedly, glad to finish.

## XVI

What, there's nothing in the moon noteworthy?  
 Nay: for if that moon could love a mortal,  
 Use, to charm him (so to fit a fancy),  
 All her magic ('t is the old sweet mythos),  
 She would turn a new side to her mortal,  
 Side unseen of herdsman, huntsman, steersman—  
 Blank to Zoroaster on his terrace,  
 Blind to Galileo on his turret,  
 Dumb to Homer, dumb to Keats—him, even!  
 Think, the wonder of the moonstruck mortal—  
 When she turns round, comes again in heaven,  
 Opens out anew for worse or better!  
 Proves she like some portent of an iceberg  
 Swimming full upon the ship it founders,  
 Hungry with huge teeth of splintered crystals?  
 Proves she as the paved work of a sapphire  
 Seen by Moses when he climbed the mountain?



Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu  
 Climbed and saw the very God, the Highest,  
 Stand upon the paved work of a sapphire.  
 Like the bodied heaven in his clearness  
 Shone the stone, the sapphire of that paved work,  
 When they ate and drank and saw God also!

## XVII

What were seen? None knows, none ever shall know.  
 Only this is sure—the sight were other,  
 Not the moon's same side, born late in Florence,  
 Dying now impoverished here in London.  
 God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures  
 Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,  
 One to show a woman when he loves her!

## XVIII

This I say of me, but think of you, Love!  
 This to you—yourself my moon of poets!  
 Ah, but that 's the world's side, there 's the wonder,  
 Thus they see you, praise you, think they know you!  
 There, in turn I stand with them and praise you—  
 Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it.  
 But the best is when I glide from out them,  
 Cross a step or two of dubious twilight,  
 Come out on the other side, the novel  
 Silent silver lights and darks undreamed of,  
 Where I hush and bless myself with silence.

## XIX

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas.  
 Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,  
 Wrote one song—and in my brain I sing it,  
 Drew one angel—borne, see, on my bosom!

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ABT VOGLER

(AFTER HE HAS BEEN EXTEMPORIZING UPON THE MUSICAL  
INSTRUMENT OF HIS INVENTION)

Would that the structure brave, the manifold music I build,  
Bidding my organ obey, calling its keys to their work,  
Claiming each slave of the sound, at a touch, as when Solo-  
mon willed

Armies of angels that soar, legions of demons that lurk,  
Man, brute, reptile, fly,—alien of end and of aim,  
Adverse, each from the other heaven-high, hell-deep  
removed,—

Should rush into sight at once as he named the ineffable  
Name,

And pile him a palace straight, to pleasure the princess he  
loved!

Would it might tarry like his, the beautiful building of mine,  
This which my keys in a crowd pressed and importuned  
to raise!

Ah, one and all, how they helped, would dispart now and  
now combine,

Zealous to hasten the work, heighten their master his  
praise!

And one would bury his brow with a blind plunge down to  
hell,

Burrow awhile and build, broad on the roots of things,  
Then up again swim into sight, having based me my palace  
well,

Founded it, fearless of flame, flat on the nether springs.

And another would mount and march, like the excellent  
minion he was,

Ay, another and yet another, one crowd but with many a  
crest,

Raising my rampired walls of gold as transparent as glass,  
Eager to do and die, yield each his place to the rest:

For higher still and higher (as a runner tips with fire,  
When a great illumination surprises a festal night—  
Outlined round and round Rome's dome from space to  
spire)  
Up, the pinnacled glory reached, and the pride of my soul  
was in sight.

In sight? Not half! for it seemed, it was certain, to match  
man's birth,  
Nature in turn conceived, obeying an impulse as I;  
And the emulous heaven yearned down, made effort to reach  
the earth,  
As the earth had done her best, in my passion, to scale the  
sky:  
Novel splendors burst forth, grew familiar and dwelt with  
mine,  
Not a point nor peak but found and fixed its wandering  
star;  
Meteor-moons, balls of blaze: and they did not pale nor  
pine,  
For earth had attained to heaven, there was no more near  
nor far.

Nay more; for there wanted not who walked in the glare  
and glow,  
Presences plain in the place; or, fresh from the Proto-  
plast,  
Furnished for ages to come, when a kindlier wind should  
blow,  
Lured now to begin and live, in a house to their liking  
at last;  
Or else the wonderful Dead who have passed through the  
body and gone,  
But were back once more to breathe in an old world worth  
their new:  
What never had been, was now; what was, as it shall be  
anon;  
And what is,—shall I say, matched both? for I was made  
perfect too.

All through my keys that gave their sounds to a wish of my  
soul,  
All through my soul that praised as its wish flowed  
visibly forth,  
All through music and me! For think, had I painted the  
whole,  
Why, there it had stood, to see, nor the process so wonder-  
worth:  
Had I written the same, made verse—still, effect proceeds  
from cause,  
Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear how the tale is  
told;  
It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience to laws,  
Painter and poet are proud in the artist-list enrolled:—

But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,  
Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo, they are!  
And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,  
That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but  
a star.  
Consider it well: each tone of our scale in itself is naught:  
It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all is said:  
Give it to me to use! I mix it with two in my thought:  
And there! Ye have heard and seen: consider and bow  
the head!

Well, it is gone at last, the palace of music I reared;  
Gone! and the good tears start, the praises that come too  
slow;  
For one is assured at first, one scarce can say that he feared,  
That he even gave it a thought, the gone thing was to go,  
Never to be again! But many more of the kind  
As good, nay, better, perchance: is this your comfort to me?  
To me, who must be saved because I cling with my mind  
To the same, same self, same love, same God: ay, what  
was, shall be.

Therefore to whom turn I but to thee, the ineffable Name?  
Builder and maker, thou, of houses not made with hands!  
What, have fear of change from thee who art ever the same?

Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that thy power  
expands?

There shall never be one lost good! What was, shall live  
as before;

The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound;  
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good  
more;

On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven a perfect  
round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall  
exist;

Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor  
power

Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the  
melodist

When eternity affirms the conception of an hour,  
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,  
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky.  
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;

Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by and by.

And what is our failure here but a triumph's evidence

For the fulness of the days? Have we withered or  
agonized?

Why else was the pause prolonged but that singing might  
issue thence?

Why rushed the discords in, but that harmony should be  
prized?

Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to clear,

Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal and  
woe;

But God has a few of us whom he whispers in the ear;

The rest may reason and welcome; 'tis we musicians know.

Well, it is earth with me; silence resumes her reign:

I will be patient and proud, and soberly acquiesce.

Give me the keys. I feel for the common chord again,

Sliding by semitones till I sink to the minor,—yes,

And I blunt it into a ninth, and I stand on alien ground,  
Surveying awhile the heights I rolled from into the deep;  
Which, hark, I have dared and done, for my resting-place is  
found,  
The C Major of this life: so, now I will try to sleep.

678

RABBI BEN EZRA

GROW old along with me!  
The best is yet to be,  
The last of life, for which the first was made:  
Our times are in his hand  
Who saith, "A whole I planned,  
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,  
Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,  
Which lily leave and then as best recall?"  
Not that, admiring stars,  
It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;  
Mine be some figured flame which blends, transcends them  
all!"

Not for such hopes and fears  
Annulling youth's brief years,  
Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!  
Rather I prize the doubt  
Low kinds exist without,  
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,  
Were man but formed to feed  
On joy, to solely seek and find a feast:  
Such feasting ended, then  
As sure an end to men;  
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw-crammed  
beast?

Rejoice we are allied  
To that which doth provide  
And not partake, effect and not receive!  
A spark disturbs our clod;  
Nearer we hold of God  
Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff  
That turns earth's smoothness rough,  
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!  
Be our joys three-parts pain!  
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;  
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

For thence,—a paradox  
Which comforts while it mocks,—  
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:  
What I aspired to be,  
And was not, comforts me:  
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale.

What is he but a brute  
Whose flesh has soul to suit,  
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play?  
To man, propose this test—  
Thy body at its best,  
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

Yet gifts should prove their use:  
I own the Past profuse  
Of power each side, perfection every turn:  
Eyes, ears took in their dole,  
Brain treasured up the whole;  
Should not the heart beat once "How good to live and  
learn?"

Not once beat "Praise be thine!  
I see the whole design,  
I, who saw power, see now Love perfect too:

Perfect I call thy plan :  
Thanks that I was a man !  
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what thou shalt do ! ”

For pleasant is this flesh ;  
Our soul, in its rose-mesh  
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest :  
Would we some prize might hold  
To match those manifold  
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as we did best !

Let us not always say,  
“Spite of this flesh to-day  
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole ! ”  
As the bird wings and sings,  
Let us cry, “All good things  
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps  
soul ! ”

Therefore I summon age  
To grant youth's heritage,  
Life's struggle having so far reached its term :  
Thence shall I pass, approved  
A man, for aye removed  
From the developed brute ; a God though in the germ.

And I shall thereupon  
Take rest, ere I be gone  
Once more on my adventure brave and new :  
Fearless and unperplexed,  
When I wage battle next,  
What weapons to select, what armor to indue.

Youth ended, I shall try  
My gain or loss thereby ;  
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold :  
And I shall weigh the same,  
Give life its praise or blame :  
Young, all lay in dispute ; I shall know, being old.



For note, when evening shuts,  
A certain moment cuts  
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray:  
A whisper from the west  
Shoots—"Add this to the rest,  
Take it and try its worth: here dies another day."

So, still within this life,  
Though lifted o'er its strife,  
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,  
"This rage was right i' the main,  
That acquiescence vain:  
The Future I may face now I have proved the Past."

For more is not reserved  
To man, with soul just nerved  
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day:  
Here, work enough to watch  
The Master work, and catch  
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true play.

As it was better, youth  
Should strive, through acts uncouth,  
Toward making, than repose on aught found made:  
So, better, age, exempt  
From strife, should know, than tempt  
Further. Thou waitedst age: wait death nor be afraid!

Enough now, if the Right  
And Good and Infinite  
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand thine own,  
With knowledge absolute,  
Subject to no dispute  
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee feel alone.

Be there, for once and all,  
Severed great minds from small,  
Announced to each his station in the Past!  
Was I, the world arraigned,

Were they, my soul disdained,  
Right? Let age speak the truth and give us peace at last!

Now, who shall arbitrate?  
Ten men love what I hate,  
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;  
Ten, who in ears and eyes  
Match me; we all surmise,  
They this thing, and I that: whom shall my soul believe?

Not on the vulgar mass  
Called "work," must sentence pass,  
Things done, that took the eye and had the price;  
O'er which, from level stand,  
The low world laid its hand,  
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:

But all, the world's coarse thumb  
And finger failed to plumb,  
So passed in making up the main account;  
All instincts immature,  
All purposes unsure,  
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed  
Into a narrow act,  
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;  
All I could never be,  
All, men ignored in me,  
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,  
That metaphor! and feel  
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay,—  
Thou, to whom fools propound,  
When the wine makes its round,  
"Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize to-day!"

Fool! All that is, at all,  
Lasts ever, past recall;  
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:

What entered into thee,  
*That* was, is, and shall be:  
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance  
Of plastic circumstance,  
This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain arrest:  
Machinery just meant  
To give thy soul its bent,  
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

What though the earlier grooves,  
Which ran the laughing loves  
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?  
What though, about thy rim,  
Skull-things in order grim  
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?

Look not thou down but up!  
To uses of a cup,  
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,  
The new wine's foaming flow,  
The master's lips aglow!  
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needst thou with  
earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,  
Thee, God, who moulded men;  
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,  
Did I—to the wheel of life  
With shapes and colors rife,  
Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to slake thy thirst:

So, take and use thy work:  
Amend what flaws may lurk,  
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!  
My times be in thy hand!  
Perfect the cup as planned!  
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

679

## NEVER THE TIME AND THE PLACE

NEVER the time and the place  
 And the loved one all together!  
 This path—how soft to pace!  
 This May—what magic weather!  
 Where is the loved one's face?  
 In a dream that loved one's face meets mine,  
 But the house is narrow, the place is bleak  
 Where, outside, rain and wind combine  
 With a furtive ear, if I strive to speak,  
 With a hostile eye at my flushing cheek,  
 With a malice that marks each word, each sign!  
 O enemy sly and serpentine,  
 Uncoil thee from the waking man!  
 Do I hold the Past  
 Thus firm and fast  
 Yet doubt if the Future hold I can?  
 This path so soft to pace shall lead  
 Through the magic of May to herself indeed!  
 Or narrow if needs the house must be,  
 Outside are the storms and strangers: we—  
 Oh, close, safe, warm, sleep I and she, I and she.

680

## DEDICATION OF THE RING AND THE BOOK

O LYRIC Love, half angel and half bird,  
 And all a wonder and a wild desire,—  
 Boldest of hearts that ever braved the sun,  
 Took sanctuary within the holier blue,  
 And sang a kindred soul out to his face,—  
 Yet human at the red-ripe of the heart—  
 When the first summons from the darkling earth  
 Reached thee amid thy chambers, blanched their blue,  
 And bared them of the glory—to drop down,  
 To toil for man, to suffer or to die,—  
 This is the same voice: can thy soul know change?  
 Hail then, and harken from the realms of help!  
 Never may I commence my song, my due

To God who best taught song by gift of thee,  
 Except with bent head and beseeching hand—  
 That still, despite the distance and the dark,  
 What was, again may be; some interchange  
 Of grace, some splendor once thy very thought,  
 Some benediction anciently thy smile:  
 —Never conclude, but raising hand and head  
 Thither where eyes, that cannot reach, yet yearn  
 For all hope, all sustainment, all reward,  
 Their utmost up and on,—so blessing back  
 In those thy realms of help, that heaven thy home,  
 Some whiteness which, I judge, thy face makes proud,  
 Some wanness where, I think, thy foot may fall!

681

## EPILOGUE

At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time,  
 When you set your fancies free,  
 Will they pass to where—by death, fools think, imprisoned—  
 Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,  
 —Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!  
 What had I on earth to do  
 With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?  
 Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drivel  
 —Being—who?

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,  
 Never doubted clouds would break,  
 Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would  
 triumph,  
 Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,  
 Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time  
 Greet the unseen with a cheer!  
 Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,  
 "Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed,—fight on, fare ever  
 There as here!"

## EMILY BRONTE

[1818-1848]

682

## LAST LINES

No coward soul is mine,  
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:  
I see Heaven's glories shine,  
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,  
Almighty, ever-present Deity!  
Life—that in me has rest,  
As I—undying Life—have power in Thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds  
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;  
Worthless as wither'd weeds,  
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one  
Holding so fast by Thine infinity;  
So surely anchor'd on  
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love  
Thy Spirit animates eternal years,  
Pervades and broods above,  
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,  
And suns and universes cease to be,  
And Thou were left alone,  
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,  
Nor atom that his might could render void:  
Thou—Thou art Being and Breath,  
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.

683

## THE OLD STOIC

RICHES I hold in light esteem,  
And Love I laugh to scorn;  
And lust of fame was but a dream,  
That vanishd with the morn:

And if I pray, the only prayer  
That moves my lips for me  
Is, 'Leave the heart that now I bear,  
And give me liberty!'

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,  
'Tis all that I implore;  
In life and death a chainless soul,  
With courage to endure.

## ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

[1804-1875]

684

## AND SHALL TRELAWNY DIE?

A GOOD sword and a trusty hand!  
A merry heart and true!  
King James's men shall understand  
What Cornish lads can do.

And have they fixed the where and when?  
And shall Trelawny die?  
Here's twenty thousand Cornish men  
Will know the reason why!

Out spake their captain brave and bold,  
A merry wight was he:  
'If London Tower were Michael's hold,  
We'll set Trelawny free!

' We'll cross the Tamar, land to land,  
 The Severn is no stay,  
 With "one and all," and hand in hand,  
 And who shall bid us nay?

' And when we come to London Wall,  
 A pleasant sight to view,  
 Come forth! come forth, ye cowards all,  
 Here's men as good as you.

' Trelawny he's in keep and hold,  
 Trelawny he may die;  
 But here's twenty thousand Cornish bold  
 Will know the reason why! '

## COVENTRY PATMORE

[1823-1896]

685

## DEPARTURE

It was not like your great and gracious ways!  
 Do you, that have naught other to lament,  
 Never, my Love, repent  
 Of how, that July afternoon,  
 You went,  
 With sudden, unintelligible phrase,  
 And frighten'd eye,  
 Upon your journey of so many days  
 Without a single kiss, or a good-bye?  
 I knew, indeed, that you were parting soon;  
 And so we sate, within the low sun's rays,  
 You whispering to me, for your voice was weak,  
 Your harrowing praise.  
 Well, it was well  
 To hear you such things speak,  
 And I could tell  
 What made your eyes a growing gloom of love,  
 As a warm South-wind sombres a March grove.



And it was like your great and gracious ways  
 To turn your talk on daily things, my Dear,  
 Lifting the luminous, pathetic lash  
 To let the laughter flash,  
 Whilst I drew near,  
 Because you spoke so low that I could scarcely hear.  
 But all at once to leave me at the last,  
 More at the wonder than the loss aghast,  
 With huddled, unintelligible phrase,  
 And frighten'd eye,  
 And go your journey of all days  
 With not one kiss, or a good-bye,  
 And the only loveless look the look with which you  
     pass'd:  
 'Twas all unlike your great and gracious ways.

## WILLIAM (JOHNSON) CORY

[1823-1892]

686

HERACLITUS

THEY told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead,  
 They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to shed.  
 I wept as I remember'd how often you and I  
 Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,  
 A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,  
 Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake;  
 For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.

687

MIMNERMUS IN CHURCH

You promise heavens free from strife,  
     Pure truth, and perfect change of will;  
 But sweet, sweet is this human life,  
     So sweet, I fain would breathe it still:  
 Your chilly stars I can forego,  
 This warm kind world is all I know.

You say there is no substance here,  
 One great reality above:  
 Back from that void I shrink in fear,  
 And child-like hide myself in love:  
 Show me what angels feel. Till then,  
 I cling, a mere weak man, to men.

You bid me lift my mean desires  
 From faltering lips and fitful veins  
 To sexless souls, ideal quires,  
 Unwearied voices, wordless strains:  
 My mind with fonder welcome owns  
 One dear dead friend's remembered tones

Forsooth the present we must give  
 To that which cannot pass away;  
 All beauteous things for which we live  
 By laws of time and space decay.  
 But oh, the very reason why  
 I clasp them, is because they die.

## SYDNEY DOBELL

[1824-1874]

688

## THE BALLAD OF KEITH OF RAVELSTON

THE murmur of the mourning ghost  
 That keeps the shadowy kine,  
 'O Keith of Ravelston,  
 The sorrows of thy line!'

Ravelston, Ravelston,  
 The merry path that leads  
 Down the golden morning hill,  
 And thro' the silver meads;

Ravelston, Ravelston,  
 The stile beneath the tree,  
 The maid that kept her mother's kine,  
 The song that sang she!

She sang her song, she kept her kine,  
She sat beneath the thorn,  
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston  
Rode thro' the Monday morn.

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,  
His belted jewels shine;  
O Keith of Ravelston,  
The sorrows of thy line!

Year after year, where Andrew came,  
Comes evening down the glade,  
And still there sits a moonshine ghost  
Where sat the sunshine maid.

Her misty hair is faint and fair,  
She keeps the shadowy kine;  
O Keith of Ravelston,  
The sorrows of thy line!

I lay my hand upon the stile,  
The stile is lone and cold,  
The burnie that goes babbling by  
Says naught that can be told.

Yet, stranger! here, from year to year,  
She keeps her shadowy kine;  
O Keith of Ravelston,  
The sorrows of thy line!

Step out three steps, where Andrew stood—  
Why blanch thy cheeks for fear?  
The ancient stile is not alone,  
'Tis not the burn I bear!

She makes her immemorial moan,  
She keeps her shadowy kine;  
O Keith of Ravelston,  
The sorrows of thy line!

## WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

[1824-1889]

689

## THE FAIRIES

UP the airy mountain,  
Down the rushy glen,  
We daren't go a-hunting  
For fear of little men;  
Wee folk, good folk,  
Trooping all together;  
Green jacket, red cap,  
And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore  
Some make their home,  
They live on crispy pancakes  
Of yellow tide-foam;  
Some in the reeds  
Of the black mountain lake,  
With frogs for their watch-dogs.  
All night awake.

High on the hill-top  
The old King sits;  
He is now so old and gray  
He's nigh lost his wits.  
With a bridge of white mist  
Columbkil he crosses,  
On his stately journeys  
From Slieveleague to Rosses;  
Or going up with music  
On cold starry nights  
To sup with the Queen  
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget  
For seven years long;  
When she came down again  
Her friends were all gone.

They took her lightly back,  
Between the night and morrow,  
They thought that she was fast asleep,  
But she was dead with sorrow.  
They have kept her ever since  
Deep within the lake,  
On a bed of flag-leaves,  
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,  
Through the mosses bare,  
They have planted thorn-trees  
For pleasure here and there.  
If any man so daring  
As dig them up in spite,  
He shall find their sharpest thorns  
In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,  
Down the rushy glen,  
We daren't go a-hunting  
For fear of little men;  
Wee folk, good folk,  
Trooping all together;  
Green jacket, red cap,  
And white owl's feather!

GEORGE MAC DONALD

[1824-1905]

690

THAT HOLY THING

THEY all were looking for a king  
To slay their foes and lift them high:  
Thou cam'st, a little baby thing  
That made a woman cry.

O Son of Man, to right my lot  
Naught but Thy presence can avail;  
Yet on the road Thy wheels are not,  
Nor on the sea Thy sail!

My how or when Thou wilt not heed,  
But come down Thine own secret stair,  
That Thou mayst answer all my need—  
Yea, every bygone prayer.

691

BABY

WHERE did you come from, baby dear?  
Out of the everywhere into here.

Where did you get those eyes so blue?  
Out of the sky as I came through.

What makes the light in them sparkle and spin?  
Some of the starry spikes left in.

Where did you get that little tear?  
I found it waiting when I got here.

What makes your forehead so smooth and high?  
A soft hand stroked it as I went by.

What makes your cheek like a warm white rose?  
I saw something better than any one knows.

Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss?  
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

Where did you get this pearly ear?  
God spoke, and it came out to hear.

Where did you get those arms and hands?  
Love made itself into bonds and bands.

Feet, whence did you come, you darling things?  
From the same box as the cherubs' wings.

How did they all just come to be you?  
God thought about me, and so I grew.

But how did you come to us, you dear?  
God thought about you, and so I am here.

## EDWARD, EARL OF LYTTON

[1831-1892]

692

## THE LAST WISH

SINCE all that I can ever do for thee  
Is to do nothing, this my prayer must be:  
That thou mayst never guess nor ever see  
The all-endured this nothing-done costs me.

## ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

[1819-1861]

693

## SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NAUGHT AVAILETH

SAY not the struggle naught availeth,  
The labour and the wounds are vain,  
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,  
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;  
It may be, in yon smoke conceal'd,  
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,  
And, but for you, possess the field.

694

## THE STREAM OF LIFE

O STREAM descending to the sea,  
Thy mossy banks between,  
The flowerets blow, the grasses grow,  
The leafy trees are green.

In garden plots the children play,  
 The fields the labourers till,  
 And houses stand on either hand,  
 And thou descendest still.

O life descending into death,  
 Our waking eyes behold,  
 Parent and friend thy lapse attend,  
 Companions young and old.

Strong purposes our minds possess,  
 Our hearts affections fill,  
 We toil and earn, we seek and learn,  
 And thou descendest still.

O end to which our currents tend,  
 Inevitable sea,  
 To which we flow, what do we know,  
 What shall we guess of thee?

A roar we hear upon thy shore,  
 As we our course fulfil;  
 Scarce we divine a sun will shine  
 And be above us still.

Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane,  
 East wind and frost are safely gone;  
 With zephyr mild and balmy rain  
 The summer comes serenely on;  
 Earth, air, and sun and skies combine  
 To promise all that 's kind and fair;—  
 But thou, O human heart of mine,  
 Be still, contain thyself, and bear.

December days were brief and chill,  
 The winds of March were wild and drear,  
 And, nearing and receding still,  
 Spring never would, we thought, be here.



The leaves that burst, the suns that shine,  
Had, not the less, their certain date;—  
And thou, O human heart of mine,  
Be still, refrain thyself, and wait.

696

## QUA CURSUM VENTUS

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay  
With canvas drooping, side by side,  
Two towers of sail at dawn of day  
Are scarce long leagues apart descried:

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,  
And all the darkling hours they plied,  
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas  
By each was cleaving, side by side:

E'en so—but why the tale reveal  
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,  
Brief absence joined anew to feel,  
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were filled,  
And onward each rejoicing steered—  
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,  
Or wist, what first with dawn appeared!

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,  
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,  
Through winds and tides one compass guides:  
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,  
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,  
On your wide plain they join again,  
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,  
One purpose hold where'er they fare,—  
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!  
At last, at last, unite them there!

697

## WHERE LIES THE LAND?

WHERE lies the land to which the ship would go?  
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.  
And where the land she travels from? Away,  
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth face  
Linked arm in arm, how pleasant here to pace;  
Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below  
The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights when wild north-westerns rave,  
How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave!  
The dripping sailor on the reeling mast  
Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?  
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.  
And where the land she travels from? Away,  
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

## MATTHEW ARNOLD

[1822-1888]

698

## THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

COME, dear children, let us away;  
Down and away below.  
Now my brothers call from the bay;  
Now the great winds shoreward blow;  
Now the salt tides seaward flow;  
Now the wild white horses play,  
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray,  
Children dear, let us away.  
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go.

Call once yet.

In a voice that she will know:

'Margaret! Margaret!'

Children's voices should be dear

(Call once more) to a mother's ear:

(Children's voices, wild with pain.

Surely she will come again.

Call her once and come away.

This way, this way!

'Mother dear, we cannot stay.'

The wild white horses foam and fret.

Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down.

Call no more.

One last look at the white-walled town.

And the little grey church on the windy shore.

Then come down.

She will not come though you call all day.

Come away, come away.

Children dear, was it yesterday

We heard the sweet bells over the bay?

In the caverns where we lay,

Through the surf and through the swell,

The far-off sound of a silver bell?

Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,

Where the winds are all asleep;

Where the spent lights quiver and gleam;

Where the salt weed sways in the stream;

Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,

Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;

Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,

Dry their mail, and bask in the brine;

Where great whales come sailing by,

Sail and sail, with unshut eye,

Round the world for ever and aye?

When did music come this way?

Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday  
(Call yet once) that she went away?  
Once she sate with you and me,  
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,  
And the youngest sate on her knee.  
She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,  
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.  
She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea.  
She said, 'I must go, for my kinsfolk pray  
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.  
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!  
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee.'  
I said, 'Go up, dear heart, through the waves.  
Say thy prayer and come back to the kind sea-caves.'  
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay  
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?  
'The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.  
Long prayers,' I said, 'in the world they say.  
Come,' I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.  
We went up the beach, by the sandy down  
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd town.  
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,  
To the little grey church on the windy hill.  
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,  
But we stood without in the cold-blowing airs.  
We climb'd on the graves, on the stones worn with  
rains,  
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded  
panes.  
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:  
'Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here.  
Dear heart,' I said, 'we are long alone.  
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.'  
But, ah! she gave me never a look,  
For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book.  
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.  
Come away, children, call no more.  
Come away, come down, call no more.

Down, down, down;  
Down to the depths of the sea.  
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,  
Singing most joyfully.  
Hark what she sings: 'O joy, O joy,  
For the humming street, and the child with its toy.  
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well.  
For the wheel where I spun,  
And the blessèd light of the sun.'

And so she sings her fill,  
Singing most joyfully,  
Till the shuttle falls from her hand,  
And the whizzing wheel stands still.  
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand;  
And over the sand at the sea;  
And her eyes are set in a stare;  
And anon there breaks a sigh,  
And anon there drops a tear,  
From a sorrow-clouded eye,  
And a heart sorrow-laden,  
A long, long sigh  
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden,  
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children.  
Come children, come down.  
The hoarse wind blows colder;  
Lights shine in the town.  
She will start from her slumber  
When gusts shake the door;  
She will hear the winds howling,  
Will hear the waves roar.  
We shall see, while above us  
The waves roar and whirl,  
A ceiling of amber,  
A pavement of pearl.  
Singing, 'Here came a mortal,  
But faithless was she:

And alone dwell for ever  
The kings of the sea.'

But, children, at midnight,  
When soft the winds blow;  
When clear falls the moonlight;  
When spring-tides are low:  
When sweet airs come seaward  
From heaths starr'd with broom;  
And high rocks throw mildly  
On the blanch'd sands a gloom:  
Up the still, glistening beaches,  
Up the creeks we will hie;  
Over banks of bright seaweed  
The ebb-tide leaves dry.  
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,  
At the white, sleeping town;  
At the church on the hill-side—  
And then come back down.  
Singing, 'There dwells a loved one,  
But cruel is she.  
She left lonely for ever  
The kings of the sea.'

## THE SONG OF CALLICLES

THROUGH the black, rushing smoke-bursts  
Thick breaks the red flame.  
All Etna heaves fiercely  
Her forest-clothed frame.

Not here, O Apollo!  
Are haunts meet for thee.  
But, where Helicon breaks down  
In cliff to the sea.

Where the moon-silver'd inlets  
Send far their light voice  
Up the still vale of Thisbe,  
O speed, and rejoice!

On the sward at the cliff-top,  
Lie strewn the white flocks;  
On the cliff-side, the pigeons  
Roost deep in the rocks.

In the moonlight the shepherds,  
Soft lull'd by the rills,  
Lie wrapt in their blankets,  
Asleep on the hills.

—What forms are these coming  
So white through the gloom?  
What garments out-glistening  
The gold-flower'd broom?

What sweet-breathing Presence  
Out-perfumes the thyme?  
What voices enrapture  
The night's balmy prime?—

'Tis Apollo comes leading  
His choir, The Nine.  
—The Leader is fairest,  
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows.  
They stream up again.  
What seeks on this mountain  
The glorified train?—

They bathe on this mountain,  
In the spring by their road.  
Then on to Olympus,  
Their endless abode.

—Whose praise do they mention:  
Of what is it told?—  
What will be for ever.  
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father  
Of all things: and then,  
The rest of Immortals,  
The action of men.

The Day in his hotness,  
The strife with the palm;  
The Night in her silence,  
The Stars in their calm.

700

## TO MARGUERITE

YES: in the sea of life enisled,  
With echoing straits between us thrown.  
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,  
We mortal millions live *alone*.  
The islands feel the enclasping flow,  
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,  
And they are swept by balms of spring,  
And in their glens, on starry nights,  
The nightingales divinely sing;  
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,  
Across the sounds and channels pour;

O then a longing like despair  
Is to their farthest caverns sent!  
For surely once, they feel we were  
Parts of a single continent.  
Now round us spreads the watery plain—  
O might our marges meet again!

Who order'd that their longing's fire  
Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd?  
Who renders vain their deep desire?—  
A God, a God their severance ruled;  
And bade betwixt their shores to be  
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.



701

## REQUIESCAT

STREW on her roses, roses,  
 And never a spray of yew.  
 In quiet she reposes:  
 Ah! would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required:  
 She bathed it in smiles of glee.  
 But her heart was tired, tired,  
 And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,  
 In mazes of heat and sound.  
 But for peace her soul was yearning,  
 And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample Spirit,  
 It flutter'd and fail'd for breath.  
 To-night it doth inherit  
 The vasty hall of Death.

702

## SHAKESPEARE

OTHERS abide our question. Thou art free.  
 We ask and ask: Thou smilest and art still,  
 Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill  
 That to the stars uncrowns his majesty,  
 Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,  
 Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,  
 Spares but the cloudy border of his base  
 To the foil'd searching of mortality;  
 And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,  
 Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure,  
 Didst walk on earth unguess'd at. Better so!  
 All pains the immortal spirit must endure,  
 All weakness that impairs, all griefs that bow,  
 Find their sole voice in that victorious brow.

703

## RUGBY CHAPEL

*November, 1857*

COLDLY, sadly descends  
 The autumn-evening. The field  
 Strewn with its dank yellow drifts  
 Of wither'd leaves, and the elms,  
 Fade into dimness apace,  
 Silent;—hardly a shout  
 From a few boys late at their play!  
 The lights come out in the street,  
 In the school-room windows;—but cold,  
 Solemn, unlighted, austere,  
 Through the gathering darkness, arise  
 The chapel-walls, in whose bound  
 Thou, my father! art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom  
 Of the autumn evening. But ah!  
 That word, *gloom*, to my mind  
 Brings thee back, in the light  
 Of thy radiant vigor, again;  
 In the gloom of November we pass'd  
 Days not dark at thy side;  
 Seasons impair'd not the ray  
 Of thy buoyant cheerfulness clear.  
 Such thou wast! and I stand  
 In the autumn evening and think  
 Of bygone autumns with thee.

Fifteen years have gone round  
 Since thou arosest to tread,  
 In the summer-morning, the road  
 Of death, at a call unforeseen,  
 Sudden. For fifteen years,  
 We who till then in thy shade  
 Rested as under the boughs  
 Of a mighty oak, have endured  
 Sunshine and rain as we might,

Bare, unshaded, alone,  
Lacking the shelter of thee.

O strong soul, by what shore  
Tarriest thou now? For that force,  
Surely, has not been left vain!  
Somewhere, surely, afar,  
In the sounding labor-house vast  
Of being, is practised that strength,  
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,  
Conscious or not of the past,  
Still thou performest the word  
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live—  
Prompt, unwearied, as here!  
Still thou upraisest with zeal  
The humble good from the ground,  
Sternly represses the bad!  
Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse  
Those who with half-open eyes  
Tread the border-land dim  
Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st,  
Succorest!—this was thy work;  
This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life  
Of mortal men on the earth?—  
Most men eddy about  
Here and there—eat and drink,  
Chatter and love and hate,  
Gather and squander, are raised  
Aloft, are hurl'd in the dust,  
Striving blindly, achieving  
Nothing; and then they die—  
Perish;—and no one asks  
Who or what they have been,  
More than he asks what waves,  
In the moonlit solitudes mild

Of the midmost Ocean, have swell'd,  
Foam'd for a moment, and gone.

And there are some, whom a thirst  
Ardent, unquenchable, fires,  
Not with the crowd to be spent,  
Not without aim to go round  
In an eddy of purposeless dust,  
Effort unmeaning and vain.  
Ah yes! some of us strive  
Not without action to die  
Fruitless, but something to snatch  
From dull oblivion, nor all  
Glut the devouring grave!  
We, we have chosen our path—  
Path to a clear-purposed goal,  
Path of advance!—but it leads  
A long, steep journey, through sunk  
Gorges, o'er mountains in snow.  
Cheerful, with friends, we set forth—  
Then on the height, comes the storm.  
Thunder crashes from rock  
To rock, the cataracts reply,  
Lightnings dazzle our eyes.  
Roaring torrents have breach'd  
The track, the stream-bed descends  
In the place where the wayfarer once  
Planted his footstep—the spray  
Boils o'er its borders! aloft  
The unseen snow-beds dislodge  
Their hanging ruin; alas,  
Havoc is made in our train!  
Friends who set forth at our side,  
Falter, are lost in the storm.  
We, we only are left!  
With frowning foreheads, with lips  
Sternly compress'd, we strain on,  
On—and at nightfall at last  
Come to the end of our way,  
To the lonely inn 'mid the rocks;

Where the gaunt and taciturn host  
Stands on the threshold, the wind  
Shaking his thin white hairs—  
Holds his lantern to scan  
Our storm-beat figures, and asks:  
Whom in our party we bring?  
Whom we have left in the snow?

Sadly we answer: We bring  
Only ourselves! we lost  
Sight of the rest in the storm.  
Hardly ourselves we fought through,  
Stripp'd, without friends, as we are.  
Friends, companions, and train,  
The avalanche swept from our side.

But thou would'st not *alone*  
Be saved, my father! *alone*  
Conquer and come to thy goal,  
Leaving the rest in the wild.  
We were weary, and we  
Fearful, and we in our march  
Fain to drop down and to die.  
Still thou turnedst, and still  
Beckonedst the trembler, and still  
Gavest the weary thy hand.

If, in the paths of the world,  
Stones might have wounded thy feet,  
Toil or dejection have tried  
Thy spirit, of that we saw  
Nothing—to us thou wast still  
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm!  
Therefore to thee it was given  
Many to save with thyself;  
And, at the end of thy day,  
O faithful shepherd! to come,  
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.  
And through thee I believe  
In the noble and great who are gone;

Pure souls honor'd and blest  
By former ages, who else—  
Such, so soulless, so poor,  
Is the race of men whom I see—  
Seem'd but a dream of the heart,  
Seem'd but a cry of desire.  
Yes! I believe that there lived  
Others like thee in the past,  
Not like the men of the crowd  
Who all round me to-day  
Bluster or cringe, and make life  
Hideous, and arid, and vile;  
But souls temper'd with fire,  
Fervent, heroic, and good,  
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God!—or sons  
Shall I not call you? because  
Not as servants ye knew  
Your Father's innermost mind,  
His, who unwillingly sees  
One of his little ones lost—  
Yours is the praise, if mankind  
Hath not as yet in its march  
Fainted, and fallen, and died!

See! In the rocks of the world  
Marches the host of mankind,  
A feeble, wavering line.  
Where are they tending?—A God  
Marshall'd them, gave them their goal.  
Ah, but the way is so long!  
Years they have been in the wild!  
Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,  
Rising all round, overawe;  
Factions divide them, their host  
Threatens to break, to dissolve.  
—Ah, keep, keep them combined!  
Else, of the myriads who fill  
That army, not one shall arrive;

Sole they shall stray; in the rocks  
 Stagger for ever in vain.  
 Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need  
 Of your fainting, dispirited race,  
 Ye, like angels, appear,  
 Radiant with ardor divine!  
 Beacons of hope, ye appear!  
 Languor is not in your heart,  
 Weakness is not in your word,  
 Weariness not on your brow.  
 Ye alight in our van! at your voice,  
 Panic, despair, flee away.  
 Ye move through the ranks, recall  
 The stragglers, refresh the outworn,  
 Praise, re-inspire the brave!  
 Order, courage, return;  
 Eyes rekindling, and prayers,  
 Follow your steps as ye go.  
 Ye fill up the gaps in our files,  
 Strengthen the wavering line,  
 Stablish, continue our march,  
 On, to the bound of the waste,  
 On, to the City of God.

704

## MEMORIAL VERSES

*April, 1850*

GOETHE in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,  
 Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease.  
 But one such death remain'd to come;  
 The last poetic voice is dumb—  
 We stand to-day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,  
 We bow'd our head and held our breath.  
 He taught us little; but our soul  
 Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.

(G) HC XLII

With shivering heart the strife we saw  
Of passion with eternal law;  
And yet with reverential awe  
We watch'd the fount of fiery life  
Which served for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we said:  
Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.  
Physician of the iron age,  
Goethe has done his pilgrimage.  
He took the suffering human race,  
He read each wound, each weakness clear;  
And struck his finger on the place,  
And said: *Thou ailest here, and here!*  
He look'd on Europe's dying hour  
Of fitful dream and feverish power;  
His eye plunged down the weltering strife,  
The turmoil of expiring life—  
He said: *The end is everywhere,  
Art still has truth, take refuge there!*  
And he was happy, if to know  
Causes of things, and far below  
His feet to see the lurid flow  
Of terror, and insane distress,  
And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth!—Ah, pale ghosts, rejoice!  
For never has such soothing voice  
Been to your shadowy world convey'd,  
Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade  
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come  
Through Hades, and the mournful gloom.  
Wordsworth has gone from us—and ye,  
Ah, may ye feel his voice as we!  
He too upon a wintry clime  
Had fallen—on this iron time  
Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.  
He found us when the age had bound  
Our souls in its benumbing round;  
He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.



He laid us as we lay at birth  
On the cool flowery lap of earth,  
Smiles broke from us and we had ease;  
The hills were round us, and the breeze  
Went o'er the sun-lit fields again;  
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain  
Our youth returned; for there was shed  
On spirits that had long been dead,  
Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,  
The freshness of the early world.

Ah! since dark days still bring to light  
Man's prudence and man's fiery might,  
Time may restore us in his course  
Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;  
But where will Europe's latter hour  
Again find Wordsworth's healing power?  
Others will teach us how to dare,  
And against fear our breast to steel;  
Others will strengthen us to bear—  
But who, ah! who, will make us feel?  
The cloud of mortal destiny,  
Others will front it fearlessly—  
But who, like him, will put it by?

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave  
O Rotha, with thy living wave!  
Sing him thy best! for few or none  
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.

THE sea is calm to-night,  
The tide is full, the moon lies fair  
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light  
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,  
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.  
Come to the window, sweet is the night air!  
Only, from the long line of spray

Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,  
 Listen! you hear the grating roar  
 Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,  
 At their return, up the high strand.  
 Begin, and cease, and then again begin,  
 With tremulous cadence slow, and bring  
 The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago  
 Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought  
 Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow  
 Of human misery; we  
 Find also in the sound a thought,  
 Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith  
 Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore  
 Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.  
 But now I only hear  
 Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,  
 Retreating, to the breath  
 Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear  
 And naked shingles of the world.  
 Ah, love, let us be true  
 To one another! for the world, which seems  
 To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
 So various, so beautiful, so new,  
 Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,  
 Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;  
 And we are here as on a darkling plain  
 Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,  
 Where ignorant armies clash by night.

LONG fed on boundless hopes, O race of man,  
 How angrily thou spurn'st all simpler fare!  
 "Christ," some one says, "was human as we are;  
 No judge eyes us from Heaven, our sin to scan;  
 We live no more, when we have done our span."

"Well, then, for Christ," thou answerest, "who can care?  
 From sin, which Heaven records not, why forbear?  
 Live we like brutes our life without a plan!"  
 So answerest thou; but why not rather say:  
 "Hath man no second life?—*Pitch this one high!*  
 Sits there no judge in Heaven, our sin to see?—  
*More strictly, then, the inward judge obey!*  
 Was Christ a man like us? *Ah! let us try*  
*If we then, too, can be such men as he!"*

707

## WORLDLY PLACE

*EVEN in a palace, life may be led well!*  
 So spake the imperial sage, purest of men,  
 Marcus Aurelius. But the stifling den  
 Of common life, where, crowded up pell-mell,  
 Our freedom for a little bread we sell,  
 And drudge under some foolish master's ken  
 Who rates us if we peer outside our pen—  
 Match'd with a palace, is not this a hell?  
*Even in a palace!* On his truth sincere,  
 Who spoke these words, no shadow ever came;  
 And when my ill-school'd spirit is aflame  
 Some nobler, ampler stage of life to win,  
 I'll stop, and say: "There were no succor here!  
 The aids to noble life are all within."

708

## THE LAST WORD

CREEP into thy narrow bed,  
 Creep, and let no more be said!  
 Vain thy onset! all stands fast.  
 Thou thyself must break at last.

Let the long contention cease!  
 Geese are swans, and swans are geese.  
 Let them have it how they will!  
 Thou art tired; best be still.

They out-talk'd thee, hiss'd thee, tore thee?  
Better men fared thus before thee;  
Fired their ringing shot and pass'd,  
Hotly charged—and sank at last.

Charge once more, then, and be dumb!  
Let the victors, when they come,  
When the forts of folly fall,  
Find thy body by the wall!

## GEORGE MEREDITH

[1828-1909]

709

## LOVE IN THE VALLEY

UNDER yonder beech-tree single on the green-sward,  
Couch'd with her arms behind her golden head,  
Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple idly,  
Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.  
Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her,  
Press her parting lips as her waist I gather slow,  
Waking in amazement she could not but embrace me:  
Then would she hold me and never let me go?

Shy as the squirrel and wayward as the swallow,  
Swift as the swallow along the river's light  
Circling the surface to meet his mirror'd winglets,  
Fleeter she seems in her stay than in her flight.  
Shy as the squirrel that leaps among the pine-tops,  
Wayward as the swallow overhead at set of sun,  
She whom I love is hard to catch and conquer,  
Hard, but O the glory of the winning were she won!

When her mother tends her before the laughing mirror,  
Tying up her laces, looping up her hair,  
Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,  
More love should I have, and much less care.

When her mother tends her before the lighted mirror,  
Loosening her laces, combing down her curls,  
Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,  
I should miss but one for many boys and girls.

Heartless she is as the shadow in the meadows  
Flying to the hills on a blue and breezy noon.  
No, she is athirst and drinking up her wonder:  
Earth to her is young as the slip of the new moon.  
Deals she an unkindness, 'tis but her rapid measure,  
Even as in a dance; and her smile can heal no less:  
Like the swinging May-cloud that pelts the flowers with  
hailstones  
Off a sunny border, she was made to bruise and bless.

Lovely are the curves of the white owl sweeping  
Wavy in the dusk lit by one large star.  
Lone on the fir-branch, his rattle-note unvaried,  
Brooding o'er the gloom, spins the brown evejar.  
Darker grows the valley, more and more forgetting:  
So were it with me if forgetting could be will'd.  
Tell the grassy hollow that holds the bubbling well-spring,  
Tell it to forget the source that keeps it fill'd.

Stepping down the hill with her fair companions,  
Arm in arm, all against the raying West,  
Boldly she sings, to the merry tune she marches,  
Brave is her shape, and sweeter unpossess'd.  
Sweeter, for she is what my heart first awaking  
Whisper'd the world was; morning light is she.  
Love that so desires would fain keep her changeless;  
Fain would fling the net, and fain have her free.

Happy happy time, when the white star hovers  
Low over dim fields fresh with bloomy dew,  
Near the face of dawn, that draws athwart the darkness,  
Threading it with colour, like yewberries the yew.  
Thicker crowd the shades as the grave East deepens  
Glowing, and with crimson a long cloud swells.  
Maiden still the morn is; and strange she is, and secret;  
Strange her eyes; her cheeks are cold as cold sea-shells.

Sunrays, leaning on our southern hills and lighting  
Wild cloud-mountains that drag the hills along,  
Oft ends the day of your shifting brilliant laughter  
Chill as a dull face frowning on a song.

Ay, but shows the South-west a ripple-feather'd bosom  
Blown to silver while the clouds are shaken and ascend  
Scaling the mid-heavens as they stream, there comes a  
sunset  
Rich, deep like love in beauty without end.

When at dawn she sighs, and like an infant to the window  
Turns grave eyes craving light, released from dreams,  
Beautiful she looks, like a white water-lily  
Bursting out of bud in havens of the streams.  
When from bed she rises clothed from neck to ankle  
In her long nightgown sweet as boughs of May,  
Beautiful she looks, like a tall garden-lily  
Pure from the night, and splendid for the day.

Mother of the dews, dark eye-lash'd twilight,  
Low-lidded twilight, o'er the valley's brim,  
Rounding on thy breast sings the dew-delighted skylark,  
Clear as though the dewdrops had their voice in him.  
Hidden where the rose-flush drinks the rayless planet,  
Fountain-full he pours the spraying fountain-showers.  
Let me hear her laughter, I would have her ever  
Cool as dew in twilight, the lark above the flowers.

All the girls are out with their baskets for the primrose;  
Up lanes, woods through, they troop in joyful bands.  
My sweet leads: she knows not why, but now she loiters,  
Eyes the bent anemones, and hangs her hands.  
Such a look will tell that the violets are peeping,  
Coming the rose: and unaware a cry  
Springs in her bosom for odours and for colour,  
Covert and the nightingale; she knows not why.

Kerchief'd head and chin she darts between her tulips,  
Streaming like a willow gray in arrowy rain:  
Some bend beaten cheek to gravel, and their angel  
She will be; she lifts them, and on she speeds again.

Black the driving raincloud breasts the iron gateway:  
She is forth to cheer a neighbour lacking mirth.  
So when sky and grass met rolling dumb for thunder  
Saw I once a white dove, sole light of earth.

Prim little scholars are the flowers of her garden,  
Train'd to stand in rows, and asking if they please.  
I might love them well but for loving more the wild ones:  
O my wild ones! they tell me more than these.  
You, my wild one, you tell of honied field-rose,  
Violet, blushing eglantine in life; and even as they,  
They by the wayside are earnest of your goodness,  
You are of life's, on the banks that line the way.

Peering at her chamber the white crowns the red rose,  
Jasmine winds the porch with stars two and three.  
Parted is the window; she sleeps; the starry jasmine  
Breathes a falling breath that carries thoughts of me.  
Sweeter unpossess'd, have I said of her my sweetest?  
Not while she sleeps: while she sleeps the jasmine breathes,  
Luring her to love; she sleeps; the starry jasmine  
Bears me to her pillow under white rose-wreaths.

Yellow with birdfoot-trefoil are the grass-glades;  
Yellow with cinquefoil of the dew-gray leaf;  
Yellow with stonecrop; the moss-mounds are yellow;  
Blue-neck'd the wheat sways, yellowing to the sheaf.  
Green-yellow, bursts from the copse the laughing yaffle;  
Sharp as a sickle is the edge of shade and shine:  
Earth in her heart laughs looking at the heavens,  
Thinking of the harvest: I look and think of mine.

This I may know: her dressing and undressing  
Such a change of light shows as when the skies in sport  
Shift from cloud to moonlight; or edging over thunder  
Slips a ray of sun; or sweeping into port  
White sails furl; or on the ocean borders  
White sails lean along the waves leaping green.  
Visions of her shower before me, but from eyesight  
Guarded she would be like the sun were she seen.



Front door and back of the moss'd old farmhouse

Open with the morn, and in a breezy link  
Freshly sparkles garden to stripe-shadow'd orchard,  
Green across a rill where on sand the minnows wink.  
Busy in the grass the early sun of summer  
Swarms, and the blackbird's mellow fluting notes  
Call my darling up with round and roguish challenge:  
Quaintest, richest carol of all the singing throats!

Cool was the woodside; cool as her white dairy  
Keeping sweet the cream-pan; and there the boys from  
school,  
Cricketing below, rush'd brown and red with sunshine;  
O the dark translucence of the deep-eyed cool!  
Spying from the farm, herself she fetch'd a pitcher  
Full of milk, and tilted for each in turn the beak.  
Then a little fellow, mouth up and on tiptoe,  
Said, 'I will kiss you': she laugh'd and lean'd her cheek.

Doves of the fir-wood walling high our red roof  
Through the long noon coo, crooning through the coo.  
Loose droop the leaves, and down the sleepy roadway  
Sometimes pipes a chaffinch; loose droops the blue.  
Cows flap a slow tail knee-deep in the river,  
Breathless, given up to sun and gnat and fly.  
Nowhere is she seen; and if I see her nowhere,  
Lightning may come, straight rains and tiger sky.

O the golden sheaf, the rustling treasure-armful!  
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!  
O the treasure-tresses one another over  
Nodding! O the girdle slack about the waist!  
Slain are the poppies that shot their random scarlet  
Quick amid the wheat-ears: wound about the waist,  
Gather'd, see these brides of Earth one blush of ripeness!  
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!

Large and smoky red the sun's cold disk drops,  
Clipp'd by naked hills, on violet shaded snow:  
Eastward large and still lights up a bower of moonrise,  
Whence at her leisure steps the moon aglow.



Nightlong on black print-branches our beech-tree  
 Gazes in this whiteness: nightlong could I.  
 Here may life on death or death on life be painted.  
 Let me clasp her soul to know she cannot die!

Gossips count her faults; they scour a narrow chamber  
 Where there is no window, read not heaven or her.  
 'When she was a tiny,' one agèd woman quavers,  
 Plucks at my heart and leads me by the ear.  
 Faults she had once as she learn'd to run and tumbled:  
 Faults of feature some see, beauty not complete.  
 Yet, good gossips, beauty that makes holy  
 Earth and air, may have faults from head to feet.

Hither she comes; she comes to me; she lingers,  
 Deepens her brown eyebrows, while in new surprise  
 High rise the lashes in wonder of a stranger;  
 Yet am I the light and living of her eyes.  
 Something friends have told her fills her heart to brimming,  
 Nets her in her blushes, and wounds her, and tames.—  
 Sure of her haven, O like a dove alighting,  
 Arms up, she dropp'd: our souls were in our names.

Soon will she lie like a white frost sunrise.  
 Yellow oats and brown wheat, barley pale as rye,  
 Long since your sheaves have yielded to the thresher,  
 Felt the girdle loosen'd, seen the tresses fly.  
 Soon will she lie like a blood-red sunset.  
 Swift with the to-morrow, green-wing'd Spring!  
 Sing from the South-west, bring her back the truants,  
 Nightingale and swallow, song and dipping wing.

Soft new beech-leaves, up to beamy April  
 Spreading bough on bough a primrose mountain, you  
 Lucid in the moon, raise lilies to the skyfields,  
 Youngest green transfused in silver shining through:  
 Fairer than the lily, than the wild white cherry:  
 Fair as in image my seraph love appears  
 Borne to me by dreams when dawn is at my eyelids:  
 Fair as in the flesh she swims to me on tears.

Could I find a place to be alone with heaven,  
 I would speak my heart out: heaven is my need.  
 Every woodland tree is flushing like the dogwood,  
 Flashing like the whitebeam, swaying like the reed.  
 Flushing like the dogwood crimson in October;  
 Streaming like the flag-reed South-west blown;  
 Flashing as in gusts the sudden-lighted whitebeam:  
 All seem to know what is for heaven alone.

## ALEXANDER SMITH

[1829-1867]

710

BARBARA

ON the Sabbath-day,  
 Through the churchyard old and grey,  
 Over the crisp and yellow leaves, I held my rustling way;  
 And amid the words of mercy, falling on my soul like balms;  
 'Mid the gorgeous storms of music—in the mellow organ-  
       calms,  
 'Mid the upward streaming prayers, and the rich and solemn  
       psalms,  
 I stood careless, Barbara.

My heart was elsewhere  
 While the organ shook the air,  
 And the priest, with outspread hands, blessed the people  
       with a prayer;  
 But, when rising to go homeward, with a mild and saint-like  
       shine  
 Gleamed a face of airy beauty with its heavenly eyes on  
       mine—  
 Gleamed and vanished in a moment—O that face was surely  
       thine  
 Out of heaven, Barbara!

O pallid, pallid face!  
 O earnest eyes of grace!  
 When last I saw thee, dearest, it was in another place.

You came running forth to meet me with my love-gift on  
your wrist:

The flutter of a long white dress, then all was lost in mist—  
A purple stain of agony was on the mouth I kissed,  
That wild morning, Barbara!

I searched in my despair,  
Sunny noon and midnight air;  
I could not drive away the thought that you were lingering  
there.

O many and many a winter night I sat when you were gone,  
My worn face buried in my hands, beside the fire alone.  
Within the dripping churchyard, the rain plashing on your  
stone,  
You were sleeping, Barbara.

'Mong angels, do you think  
Of the precious golden link  
I clasped around your happy arm while sitting by yon  
brink?  
Or when that night of gliding dance, of laughter and  
guitars,  
Was emptied of its music, and we watched, through latticed  
bars,  
The silent midnight heaven creeping o'er us with its stars,  
Till the day broke, Barbara?

In the years I've changed;  
Wild and far my heart hath ranged,  
And many sins and errors now have been on me avenged;  
But to you I have been faithful, whatsoever good I lacked:  
I loved you, and above my life still hangs that love  
intact—  
Your love the trembling rainbow, I the reckless cataract.  
Still I love you, Barbara!

Yet, love, I am unblest;  
With many doubts oppressed,  
I wander like a desert wind, without a place of rest.  
Could I but win you for an hour from off that starry shore,

The hunger of my soul were stilled, for Death hath told  
     you more  
 Than the melancholy world doth know; things deeper than  
     all lore  
 Will you teach me, Barbara?

In vain, in vain, in vain,  
 You will never come again.  
 There droops upon the dreary hills a mournful fringe of  
     rain;  
 The gloaming closes slowly round, loud winds are in the tree,  
 Round selfish shores for ever moans the hurt and wounded  
     sea,  
 There is no rest upon the earth, peace is with Death and thee,  
 Barbara!

## CHARLES DICKENS

[1812-1870]

711

## THE IVY GREEN

OH, a dainty plant is the Ivy green,  
 That creepeth o'er ruins old!  
 Of right choice food are his meals I ween,  
 In his cell so lone and cold.  
 The wall must be crumbled, the stone decayed,  
 To pleasure his dainty whim:  
 And the mouldering dust that years have made  
 Is a merry meal for him.  
     Creeping where no life is seen,  
     A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Fast he stealeth on, though he wears no wings,  
 And a stanch old heart has he.  
 How closely he twineth, how tight he clings  
 To his friend the huge Oak Tree!  
 And slily he traileth along the ground,  
 And his leaves he gently waves,  
 As he joyously hugs and crawleth round

The rich mould of dead men's graves.  
 Creeping where grim death has been,  
 A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Whole ages have fled and their works decayed,  
 And nations have scattered been;  
 But the stout old Ivy shall never fade,  
 From its hale and hearty green.  
 The brave old plant in its lonely days,  
 Shall fatten upon the past:  
 For the stateliest building man can raise,  
 Is the Ivy's food at last.  
 Creeping on, where time has been,  
 A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

## THOMAS EDWARD BROWN

[1830-1897]

712

## MY GARDEN

A GARDEN is a lovesome thing, God wot!  
 Rose plot,  
 Fringed pool,  
 Fern'd grot—  
 The veriest school  
 Of peace; and yet the fool  
 Contends that God is not—  
 Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?  
 Nay, but I have a sign;  
 'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

## JAMES THOMSON (B. V.)

[1834-1882]

713

## GIFTS

GIVE a man a horse he can ride,  
 Give a man a boat he can sail;  
 And his rank and wealth, his strength and health,  
 On sea nor shore shall fail.

Give a man a pipe he can smoke,  
 Give a man a book he can read:  
 And his home is bright with a calm delight,  
 Though the room be poor indeed.

Give a man a girl he can love,  
 As I, O my love, love thee;  
 And his heart is great with the pulse of Fate,  
 At home, on land, on sea.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

[1828-1882]

714

THE BLESSÈD DAMOZEL

THE blessèd Damozel lean'd out  
 From the gold bar of Heaven:  
 Her blue grave eyes were deeper much  
 Than a deep water, even.  
 She had three lilies in her hand,  
 And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,  
 No wrought flowers did adorn,  
 But a white rose of Mary's gift  
 On the neck meetly worn;  
 And her hair, lying down her back,  
 Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseem'd she scarce had been a day  
 One of God's choristers;  
 The wonder was not yet quite gone  
 From that still look of hers;  
 Albeit, to them she left, her day  
 Had counted as ten years.

(To one it is ten years of years:  
 . . . Yet now, here in this place,

Surely she lean'd o'er me,—her hair  
Fell all about my face. . . .  
Nothing: the Autumn-fall of leaves.  
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the terrace of God's house  
That she was standing on,—  
By God built over the sheer depth  
In which Space is begun;  
So high, that looking downward thence,  
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies from Heaven across the flood  
Of ether, as a bridge.  
Beneath, the tides of day and night  
With flame and darkness ridge  
The void, as low as where this earth  
Spins like a fretful midge.

But in those tracts, with her, it was  
The peace of utter light  
And silence. For no breeze may stir  
Along the steady flight  
Of seraphim; no echo there,  
Beyond all depth or height.

Heard hardly, some of her new friends,  
Playing at holy games,  
Spake, gentle-mouth'd, among themselves,  
Their virginal chaste names;  
And the souls, mounting up to God,  
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bow'd herself, and stoop'd  
Into the vast waste calm;  
Till her bosom's pressure must have made  
The bar she lean'd on warm,  
And the lilies lay as if asleep  
Along her bended arm.

From the fixt lull of Heaven, she saw  
Time, like a pulse, shake fierce  
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove,  
In that steep gulf, to pierce  
The swarm; and then she spoke, as when  
The stars sang in their spheres.

‘I wish that he were come to me,  
For he will come,’ she said.  
‘Have I not pray’d in solemn Heaven?  
On earth, has he not pray’d?  
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?  
And shall I feel afraid?’

‘When round his head the aureole clings,  
And he is clothed in white,  
I’ll take his hand, and go with him  
To the deep wells of light,  
And we will step down as to a stream  
And bathe there in God’s sight.

‘We two will stand beside that shrine,  
Occult, withheld, untrod,  
Whose lamps tremble continually  
With prayer sent up to God;  
And where each need, reveal’d, expects  
Its patient period.

‘We two will lie i’ the shadow of  
That living mystic tree  
Within whose secret growth the Dove  
Sometimes is felt to be,  
While every leaf that His plumes touch  
Saith His name audibly.

‘And I myself will teach to him,—  
I myself, lying so,—  
The songs I sing here; which his mouth  
Shall pause in, hush’d and slow,  
Finding some knowledge at each pause,  
And some new thing to know.’



(Alas! to *her* wise simple mind  
These things were all but known  
Before: they trembled on her sense,—  
Her voice had caught their tone.  
Alas for lonely Heaven! Alas  
For life wrung out alone!

Alas, and though the end were reach'd? . . .  
Was *thy* part understood  
Or borne in trust? And for her sake  
Shall this too be found good?—  
May the close lips that knew not prayer  
Praise ever, though they would?)

'We two,' she said, 'will seek the groves  
Where the lady Mary is,  
With her five handmaidens, whose names  
Are five sweet symphonies:—  
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,  
Margaret and Rosalys.

'Circle-wise sit they, with bound locks  
And bosoms coverèd;  
Into the fine cloth, white like flame,  
Weaving the golden thread,  
To fashion the birth-robcs for them  
Who are just born, being dead.

'He shall fear, haply, and be dumb.  
Then I will lay my cheek  
To his, and tell about our love,  
Not once abash'd or weak:  
And the dear Mother will approve  
My pride, and let me speak.

'Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,  
To Him round whom all souls  
Kneel—the unnumber'd solemn heads  
Bow'd with their aureoles:  
And Angels, meeting us, shall sing  
To their citherns and citoles.

'There will I ask of Christ the Lord  
 Thus much for him and me:—  
 To have more blessing than on earth  
 In nowise; but to be  
 As then we were,—being as then  
 At peace. Yea, verily.

'Yea, verily; when he is come  
 We will do thus and thus:  
 Till this my vigil seem quite strange  
 And almost fabulous;  
 We two will live at once, one life;  
 And peace shall be with us.'

She gazed, and listen'd, and then said,  
 Less sad of speech than mild,—  
 'All this is when he comes.' She ceased:  
 The light thrill'd past her, fill'd  
 With Angels, in strong level lapse.  
 Her eyes pray'd, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their flight  
 Was vague 'mid the poised spheres.  
 And then she cast her arms along  
 The golden barriers,  
 And laid her face between her hands,  
 And wept. (I heard her tears.)

#### THE KING'S TRAGEDY

715      *James I of Scots.—20th February, 1437*

I CATHERINE am a Douglas born,  
 A name to all Scots dear;  
 And Kate Barlass they've called me now  
 Through many a waning year.

This old arm's withered now. 'Twas once  
 Most deft 'mong maidens all  
 To rein the steed, to wing the shaft,  
 To smite the palm-play ball.

In hall adown the close-linked dance  
It has shone most white and fair;  
It has been the rest for a true lord's head,  
And many a sweet babe's nursing-bed,  
And the bar to a King's chambére.

Aye, lasses, draw round Kate Barlass,  
And hark with bated breath  
How good King James, King Robert's son,  
Was foully done to death.

Through all the days of his gallant youth  
The princely James was pent,  
By his friends at first and then by his foes,  
In long imprisonment.

For the elder Prince, the kingdom's heir,  
By treason's murderous brood  
Was slain; and the father quaked for the child  
With the royal mortal blood.

I' the Bass Rock fort, by his father's care,  
Was his childhood's life assured;  
And Henry the subtle Bolingbroke,  
Proud England's King, 'neath the southron yoke  
His youth for long years immured.

Yet in all things meet for a kingly man  
Himself did he approve;  
And the nightingale through his prison-wall  
Taught him both lore and love.

For once, when the bird's song drew him close  
To the opened window-pane,  
In her bowers beneath a lady stood,  
A light of life to his sorrowful mood,  
Like a lily amid the rain.

And for her sake, to the sweet bird's note,  
He framed a sweeter Song,  
More sweet than ever a poet's heart  
Gave yet to the English tongue.

She was a lady of royal blood;  
And when, past sorrow and teen,  
He stood where still through his crownless years  
His Scottish realm had been,  
At Scone were the happy lovers crowned,  
A heart-wed King and Queen.

But the bird may fall from the bough of youth,  
And song be turned to moan,  
And Love's storm-cloud be the shadow of Hate,  
When the tempest-waves of a troubled State  
Are beating against a throne.

Yet well they loved; and the god of Love,  
Whom well the King had sung,  
Might find on the earth no truer hearts  
His lowliest swains among.

From the days when first she rode abroad  
With Scottish maids in her train,  
I Catherine Douglas won the trust  
Of my mistress, sweet Queen Jane.

And oft she sighed, "To be born a King!"  
And oft along the way  
When she saw the homely lovers pass  
She has said, "Alack the day!"

Years waned,—the loving and toiling years:  
Till England's wrong renewed  
Drove James, by outrage cast on his crown,  
To the open field of feud.

'Twas when the King and his host were met  
At the leaguer of Roxbro' hold,  
The Queen o' the sudden sought his camp  
With a tale of dread to be told.

And she showed him a secret letter writ  
That spoke of treasonous strife,  
And how a band of his noblest lords  
Were sworn to take his life.

“And it may be here or it may be there,  
In the camp or the court,” she said:  
“But for my sake come to your people’s arms  
And guard your royal head.”

Quoth he, “’Tis the fifteenth day of the siege,  
And the castle’s nigh to yield.”  
“O face your foes on your throne,” she cried,  
“And show the power you wield;  
And under your Scottish people’s love  
You shall sit as under your shield.”

At the fair Queen’s side I stood that day  
When he bade them raise the siege,  
And back to his Court he sped to know  
How the lords would meet their Liege.

But when he summoned his Parliament,  
The louring brows hung round,  
Like clouds that circle the mountain-head  
Ere the first low thunders sound.

For he had tamed the nobles’ lust  
And curbed their power and pride,  
And reached out an arm to right the poor  
Through Scotland far and wide;  
And many a lordly wrong-doer  
By the headsman’s axe had died.

’Twas then upspoke Sir Robert Græme,  
The bold o’ermastering man:—  
“O King, in the name of your Three Estates  
I set you under their ban!

“For, as your lords made oath to you  
Of service and fealty,  
Even in likewise you pledged your oath  
Their faithful sire to be:—

“Yet all we here that are nobly sprung  
Have mourned dear kith and kin

Since first for the Scottish Barons' curse  
Did your bloody rule begin."

With that he laid his hands on his King:—  
"Is this not so, my lords?"  
But of all who had sworn to league with him  
Not one spake back to his words.

Quoth the King:—"Thou speak'st but for one Estate,  
Nor doth it avow thy gage.  
Let my liege lords hale this traitor hence!"  
The Græme fired dark with rage:—  
"Who works for lesser men than himself,  
He earns but a witless wage!"

But soon from the dungeon where he lay  
He won by privy plots,  
And forth he fled with a price on his head  
To the country of the Wild Scots.

And word there came from Sir Robert Græme  
To the King at Edinbro':—  
"No Liege of mine thou art; but I see  
From this day forth alone in thee  
God's creature, my mortal foe.

"Through thee are my wife and children lost,  
My heritage and lands;  
And when my God shall show me a way,  
Thyself my mortal foe will I slay  
With these my proper hands."

Against the coming of Christmastide  
That year the King bade call  
I' the Black Friars' Charterhouse of Perth  
A solemn festival.

And we of his household rode with him  
In a close-ranked company;  
But not till the sun had sunk from his throne  
Did we reach the Scottish Sea.

That eve was clenched for a boding storm,  
    'Neath a toilsome moon half seen;  
The cloud stooped low and the surf rose high;  
And where there was a line of the sky,  
    Wild wings loomed dark between.

And on a rock of the black beach-side,  
    By the veiled moon dimly lit,  
There was something seemed to heave with life  
    As the King drew nigh to it.

And was it only the tossing furze  
    Or brake of the waste sea-wold?  
Or was it an eagle bent to the blast?  
When near we came, we knew it at last  
    For a woman tattered and old.

But it seemed as though by a fire within  
    Her writhen limbs were wrung;  
And as soon as the King was close to her,  
    She stood up gaunt and strong.

'Twas then the moon sailed clear of the rack  
    On high in her hollow dome;  
And still as aloft with hoary crest  
    Each clamorous wave rang home,  
Like fire in snow the moonlight blazed  
    Amid the champing foam.

And the woman held his eyes with her eyes:—  
    “O King, thou art come at last;  
But thy wraith has haunted the Scottish Sea  
    To my sight for four years past.

“Four years it is since first I met,  
    'Twixt the Duchray and the Dhu,  
A shape whose feet clung close in a shroud,  
    And that shape for thine I knew.

“A year again, and on Inchkeith Isle  
    I saw thee pass in the breeze,

With the cerecloth risen above thy feet  
And wound about thy knees.

“And yet a year, in the Links of Forth,  
As a wanderer without rest,  
Thou cam’st with both thine arms i’ the shroud  
That clung high up thy breast.

“And in this hour I find thee here,  
And well mine eyes may note  
That the winding-sheet hath passed thy breast  
And risen around thy throat.

“And when I meet thee again, O King,  
That of death hast such sore drouth,—  
Except thou turn again on this shore,—  
The winding-sheet shall have moved once more  
And covered thine eyes and mouth.

“O King, whom poor men bless for their King,  
Of thy fate be not so fain;  
But these my words for God’s message take,  
And turn thy steed, O King, for her sake  
Who rides beside thy rein!”

While the woman spoke, the King’s horse reared  
As if it would breast the sea,  
And the Queen turned pale as she heard on the gale  
The voice die dolorously.

When the woman ceased, the steed was still,  
But the King gazed on her yet,  
And in silence save for the wail of the sea  
His eyes and her eyes met.

At last he said:—“God’s ways are His own;  
Man is but shadow and dust.  
Last night I prayed by His altar-stone;  
To-night I wend to the feast of His Son;  
And in Him I set my trust.



"I have held my people in sacred charge,  
And have not feared the sting  
Of proud men's hate,—to His will resign'd  
Who has but one same death for a hind  
And one same death for a King.

"And if God in His wisdom have brought close  
The day when I must die,  
That day by water or fire or air  
My feet shall fall in the destined snare  
Wherever my road may lie.

"What man can say but the Fiend hath set  
Thy sorcery on my path,  
My heart with the fear of death to fill,  
And turn me against God's very will  
To sink in His burning wrath?"

The woman stood as the train rode past,  
And moved nor limb nor eye;  
And when we were shipped, we saw her there  
Still standing against the sky.

As the ship made way, the moon once more  
Sank slow in her rising pall;  
And I thought of the shrouded wraith of the King,  
And I said, "The Heavens know all."

And now, ye lasses, must ye hear  
How my name is Kate Barlass:—  
But a little thing, when all the tale  
Is told of the weary mass  
Of crime and woe which in Scotland's realm  
God's will let come to pass.

'Twas in the Charterhouse of Perth  
That the King and all his Court  
Were met, the Christmas Feast being done,  
For solace and disport.

'Twas a wind-wild eve in February,  
And against the casement-pane  
The branches smote like summoning hands  
And muttered the driving rain.

And when the wind swooped over the lift  
And made the whole heaven frown,  
It seemed a grip was laid on the walls  
To tug the housetop down.

And the Queen was there, more stately fair  
Than a lily in garden set;  
And the king was loth to stir from her side;  
For as on the day when she was his bride,  
Even so he loved her yet.

And the Earl of Athole, the King's false friend,  
Sat with him at the board;  
And Robert Stuart the chamberlain  
Who had sold his sovereign Lord.

Yet the traitor Christopher Chaumber there  
Would fain have told him all,  
And vainly four times that night he strove  
To reach the King through the hall.

But the wine is bright at the goblet's brim  
Though the poison lurk beneath;  
And the apples still are red on the tree  
Within whose shade may the adder be  
That shall turn thy life to death.

There was a knight of the King's fast friends  
Whom he called the King of Love;  
And to such bright cheer and courtesy  
That name might best behave.

And the King and Queen both loved him well  
For his gentle knightliness;  
And with him the King, as that eve wore on,  
Was playing at the chess.

And the King said, (for he thought to jest  
And soothe the Queen thereby;)—  
“In a book ’tis writ that this same year  
A King shall in Scotland die.

“And I have pondered the matter o’er,  
And this have I found, Sir Hugh,—  
There are but two Kings on Scottish ground,  
And those Kings are I and you.

“And I have a wife and a newborn heir,  
And you are yourself alone;  
So stand you stark at my side with me  
To guard our double throne.

“For here sit I and my wife and child,  
As well your heart shall approve,  
In full surrender and soothfastness,  
Beneath your Kingdom of Love.”

And the Knight laughed, and the Queen too smiled;  
But I knew her heavy thought,  
And I strove to find in the good King’s jest  
What cheer might thence be wrought.

And I said, “My Liege, for the Queen’s dear love  
Now sing the song that of old  
You made, when a captive Prince you lay,  
And the nightingale sang sweet on the spray,  
In Windsor’s castle-hold.”

Then he smiled the smile I knew so well  
When he thought to please the Queen;  
The smile which under all bitter frowns  
Of hate that rose between,  
For ever dwelt at the poet’s heart  
Like the bird of love unseen.

And he kissed her hand and took his harp,  
And the music sweetly rang;

And when the song burst forth, it seemed  
 'Twas the nightingale that sang.

*"Worship, ye lovers, on this May:  
 Of bliss your kalends are begun:  
 Sing with us, Away, Winter, away!  
 Come, Summer, the sweet season and sun!  
 Awake for shame,—your heaven is won,—  
 And amorously your heads lift all:  
 Thank Love, that you to his grace doth call!"*

But when he bent to the Queen, and sang  
 The speech whose praise was hers,  
 It seemed his voice was the voice of the Spring  
 And the voice of the bygone years.

*"The fairest and the freshest flower  
 That ever I saw before that hour,  
 The which o' the sudden made to start  
 The blood of my body to my heart.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Ah sweet, are ye a worldly creature  
 Or heavenly thing in form of nature?"*

And the song was long, and richly stored  
 With wonder and beauteous things;  
 And the harp was tuned to every change  
 Of minstrel ministerings;  
 But when he spoke of the Queen at the last,  
 Its strings were his own heart-strings.

*"Unworthy but only of her grace,  
 Upon Love's rock that's easy and sure,  
 In guerdon of all my love's space  
 She took me her humble creature.  
 Thus fell my blissful aventure  
 In youth of love that from day to day  
 Flowereth aye new, and further I say.*

*"To reckon all the circumstance  
 As it happed when lessen gan my sore,*

*Of my rancor and woful chance,  
It were too long,—I have done therefor.  
And of this flower I say no more  
But unto my help her heart hath tended  
And even from death her man defended.”*

“Aye, even from death,” to myself I said;  
For I thought of the day when she  
Had borne him the news, at Roxbro’ siege,  
Of the fell confederacy.

But Death even then took aim as he sang  
With an arrow deadly bright;  
And the grinning skull lurked grimly aloof,  
And the wings were spread far over the roof  
More dark than the winter night.

Yet truly along the amorous song  
Of Love’s high pomp and state,  
There were words of Fortune’s trackless doom  
And the dreadful face of Fate.

And oft have I heard again in dreams  
The voice of dire appeal  
In which the King then sang of the pit  
That is under Fortune’s wheel.

*“And under the wheel beheld I there  
An ugly Pit as deep as hell,  
That to behold I quaked for fear:  
And this I heard, that who therein fell  
Came no more up, tidings to tell:  
Whereat, astound of the fearful sight,  
I wist not what to do for fright.”*

And oft has my thought called up again  
These words of the changeful song:—  
“Wist thou thy pain and thy travail  
To come, well might’st thou weep and wail!”  
And our wail, O God! is long.

But the song's end was all of his love;  
And well his heart was grac'd  
With her smiling lips and her tear-bright eyes  
As his arm went round her waist.

And on the swell of her long fair throat  
Close clung the necklet-chain  
As he bent her pearl-tir'd head aside,  
And in the warmth of his love and pride  
He kissed her lips full fain.

And her true face was a rosy red,  
The very red of the rose  
That, couched on the happy garden-bed,  
In the summer sunlight glows.

And all the wondrous things of love  
That sang so sweet through the song  
Were in the look that met in their eyes,  
And the look was deep and long.

'Twas then a knock came at the outer gate,  
And the usher sought the King:  
"The woman you met by the Scottish Sea,  
My Liege, would tell you a thing;  
And she says that her present need for speech  
Will bear no gainsaying."

And the King said:—"The hour is late;  
To-morrow will serve, I ween."  
Then he charged the usher strictly, and said:  
"No word of this to the Queen."

But the usher came again to the King,  
"Shall I call her back?" quoth he:  
"For as she went on her way, she cried,  
'Woe! Woe! then the thing must be!'"

And the King paused, but he did not speak.  
Then he called for the Vøidee-cup;

And as we heard the twelfth hour strike,  
There by true lips and false lips alike  
Was the draught of trust drained up.

So with reverence meet to King and Queen,  
To bed went all from the board;  
And the last to leave of the courtly train  
Was Robert Stuart the chamberlain  
Who had sold his sovereign lord.

And all the locks of the chamber-door  
Had the traitor riven and brast;  
And that Fate might win sure way from afar,  
He had drawn out every bolt and bar  
That made the entrance fast.

And now at midnight he stole his way  
To the moat of the outer wall,  
And laid strong hurdles closely across  
Where the traitors' tread should fall.

But we that were the Queen's bower-maids  
Alone were left behind;  
And with heed we drew the curtains close  
Against the winter wind.

And now that all was still through the hall,  
More clearly we heard the rain  
That clamored ever against the glass  
And the boughs that beat on the pane.

But the fire was bright in the ingle-nook,  
And through empty space around  
The shadows cast on the arras'd wall  
'Mid the pictured kings stood sudden and tall  
Like spectres sprung from the ground.

And the bed was dight in a deep alcove;  
And as he stood by the fire  
The king was still in talk with the Queen  
While he doffed his goodly attire.

And the song had brought the image back  
Of many a bygone year;  
And many a loving word they said  
With hand in hand and head laid to head;  
And none of us went anear.

But Love was weeping outside the house,  
A child in the piteous rain;  
And as he watched the arrow of Death,  
He wailed for his own shafts close in the sheath  
That never should fly again.

And now beneath the window arose  
A wild voice suddenly:  
And the King reared straight, but the Queen fell  
back  
As for bitter dule to dree;  
And all of us knew the woman's voice  
Who spoke by the Scottish Sea.

"O King," she cried, "in an evil hour  
They drove me from thy gate;  
And yet my voice must rise to thine ears;  
But alas! it comes too late!

"Last night at mid-watch, by Aberdour,  
When the moon was dead in the skies  
O King, in a death-light of thine own  
I saw thy shape arise.

"And in full season, as erst I said,  
The doom had gained its growth;  
And the shroud had risen above thy neck  
And covered thine eyes and mouth.

"And no moon woke, but the pale dawn broke,  
And still thy soul stood there;  
And I thought its silence cried to my soul  
As the first rays crowned its hair.



"Since then have I journeyed fast and fain  
In very despite of Fate,  
Lest Hope might still be found in God's will:  
But they drove me from thy gate.

"For every man on God's ground, O King,  
His death grows up from his birth  
In a shadow-plant perpetually;  
And thine towers high, a black yew-tree,  
O'er the Charterhouse of Perth!"

That room was built far out from the house;  
And none but we in the room  
Might hear the voice that rose beneath,  
Nor the tread of the coming doom.

For now there came a torchlight-glare,  
And a clang of arms there came;  
And not a soul in that space but thought  
Of the foe Sir Robert Græme.

Yea, from the country of the Wild Scots,  
O'er mountain, valley, and glen,  
He had brought with him in murderous league  
Three hundred armed men.

The King knew all in an instant's flash,  
And like a King did he stand;  
But there was no armor in all the room  
Nor weapon lay to his hand.

And all we women flew to the door  
And thought to have made it fast:  
But the bolts were gone and the bars were gone  
And the locks were riven and brast.

And he caught the pale queen in his arms  
As the iron footsteps fell,—  
Then loosed her, standing alone, and said,  
"Our bliss was our farewell!"

And 'twixt his lips he murmured a prayer,  
And he crossed his brow and breast;  
And proudly in royal hardihood  
Even so with folded arms he stood,—  
The prize of the bloody quest.

Then on me leaped the Queen like a deer:  
"Catherine, help!" she cried.  
And low at his feet we clasped his knees  
Together side by side.  
"Oh! even a King, for his people's sake,  
From treasonous death must hide!"

"For *her* sake most!" I cried, and I marked  
The pang that my words would wring,  
And the iron tongs from the chimney-nook  
I snatched and held to the King:—  
"Wrench up the plank! and the vault beneath  
Shall yield safe harboring."

With brows low-bent, from my eager hand  
The heavy heft did he take;  
And the plank at his feet he wrenched and tore;  
And as he frowned through the open floor,  
Again I said, "For her sake!"

Then he cried to the Queen, "God's will be done!"  
For her hands were clasped in prayer.  
And down he sprang to the inner crypt;  
And straight we closed the plank he had ripp'd  
And toiled to smoothe it fair.

(Alas! in that vault a gap once was  
Where thro' the King might have fled;  
But three days since close-walled had it been  
By his will; for the ball would roll therein  
When without at the palm he play'd.)

Then the Queen cried, "Catherine, keep the door,  
And I to this will suffice!"

At her word I rose all dazed to my feet,  
And my heart was fire and ice.

And louder ever the voices grew,  
And the tramp of men in mail;  
Until to my brain it seemed to be  
As though I tossed on a ship at sea  
In the teeth of a crashing gale.

Then back I flew to the rest; and hard  
We strove with sinews knit  
To force the table against the door;  
But we might not compass it.

Then my wild gaze sped far down the hall  
To the place of the hearthstone-sill;  
And the Queen bent ever above the floor,  
For the plank was rising still.

And now the rush was heard on the stair,  
And "God, what help?" was our cry.  
And was I frenzied or was I bold?  
I looked at each empty stanchion-hold,  
And no bar but my arm had I!

Like iron felt my arm, as through  
The staple I made it pass:—  
Alack! it was flesh and bone—no more!  
'Twas Catherine Douglas sprang to the door,  
But I fell back Kate Barlass.

With that they all thronged into the hall,  
Half dim to my failing ken;  
And the space that was but a void before  
Was a crowd of wrathful men.  
Behind the door I had fall'n and lay,  
Yet my sense was wildly aware,  
And for all the pain of my shattered arm  
I never fainted there.

Even as I fell, my eyes were cast  
Where the King leaped down to the pit;  
And lo! the plank was smooth in its place,  
And the Queen stood far from it.

And under the litters and through the bed  
And within the presses all  
The traitors sought for the King, and pierced  
The arras around the wall.

And through the chamber they ramped and stormed  
Like lions loose in the lair,  
And scarce could trust to their very eyes,—  
For behold! no King was there.

Then one of them seized the Queen, and cried,—  
“Now tell us, where is thy lord?”  
And he held the sharp point over her heart:  
She dropped not her eyes nor did she start,  
But she answered never a word.

Then the sword half pierced the true true breast:  
But it was the Græme's own son  
Cried, “This is a woman,—we seek a man!”  
And away from her girdle-zone  
He struck the point of the murderous steel;  
And that foul deed was not done.

And forth flowed all the throng like a sea,  
And 'twas empty space once more;  
And my eyes sought out the wounded Queen  
As I lay behind the door.

And I said: “Dear Lady, leave me here,  
For I cannot help you now;  
But fly while you may, and none shall reck  
Of my place here lying low.”

And she said, “My Catherine, God help thee!”  
Then she looked to the distant floor,

And clasping her hands, "Oh God help *him*,"  
She sobbed, "for we can no more!"

But God He knows what help may mean,  
If it mean to live or to die;  
And what sore sorrow and mighty moan  
On earth it may cost ere yet a throne  
Be filled in His house on high.

And now the ladies fled with the Queen:  
And through the open door  
The night-wind wailed round the empty room  
And the rushes shook on the floor.

And the bed drooped low in the dark recess  
Whence the arras was rent away;  
And the firelight still shone over the space  
Where our hidden secret lay.

And the rain had ceased, and the moonbeams lit  
The window high in the wall,—  
Bright beams that on the plank that I knew  
Through the painted pane did fall  
And gleamed with the splendor of Scotland's crown  
And shield armorial.

But then a great wind swept up the skies,  
And the climbing moon fell back;  
And the royal blazon fled from the floor,  
And nought remained on its track;  
And high in the darkened window-pane  
The shield and the crown were black.

And what I say next I partly saw  
And partly I heard in sooth,  
And partly since from the murderers' lips  
The torture wrung the truth.

For now again came the armèd tread  
And fast through the hall it fell;

But the throng was less; and ere I saw,  
By the voice without I could tell  
That Robert Stuart had come with them  
Who knew that chamber well.

And over the space the Græme strode dark  
With his mantle round him flung;  
And in his eye was a flaming light  
But not a word on his tongue.

And Stuart held a torch to the floor,  
And he found the thing he sought;  
And they slashed the plank away with their swords;  
And O God! I fainted not!

And the traitor held his torch in the gap,  
All smoking and smouldering;  
And through the vapor and fire, beneath  
In the dark crypt's narrow ring,  
With a shout that pealed to the room's high roof  
They saw their naked King.

Half naked he stood, but stood as one  
Who yet could do and dare;  
With the crown, the King was stript away,—  
The Knight was reft of his battle-array,—  
But still the Man was there.

From the rout then stepped a villain forth,—  
Sir John Hall was his name;  
With a knife unsheathed he leapt to the vault  
Beneath the torchlight-flame.

Of his person and stature was the King  
A man right manly strong,  
And mightily by the shoulder-blades  
His foe to his feet he flung.

Then the traitor's brother, Sir Thomas Hall,  
Sprang down to work his worst;

And the King caught the second man by the neck  
And flung him above the first.

And he smote and trampled them under him;  
And a long month thence they bare  
All black their throats with the grip of his hands  
When the hangman's hand came there.

And sore he strove to have had their knives,  
But the sharp blades gashed his hands.  
Oh James! so armed, thou hadst battled there  
Till help had come of thy bands;  
And oh! once more thou hadst held our throne  
And ruled thy Scottish lands!

But while the King o'er his foes still raged  
With a heart that nought could tame,  
Another man sprang down to the crypt:  
And with his sword in his hand hard-gripp'd  
There stood Sir Robert Græme.

(Now shame on the recreant traitor's heart  
Who durst not face his King  
Till the body unarmed was wearied out  
With two-fold combating!

Ah! well might the people sing and say,  
As oft ye have heard aright:—  
“O Robert Græme, O Robert Græme,  
Who slew our King, God give thee shame!”  
For he slew him not as a knight.)

And the naked King turned round at bay,  
But his strength had passed the goal.  
And he could but gasp:—“Mine hour is come;  
But oh! to succor thine own soul's doom,  
Let a priest now shrive my soul!”

And the traitor looked on the King's spent strength,  
And said:—“Have I kept my word?—

Yea, King, the mortal pledge that I gave?  
No black friar's shrift thy soul shall save,  
But the shrift of this red sword!"

With that he smote his King through the breast;  
And all they three in that pen  
Fell on him and stabbed and stabbed him there  
Like merciless murderous men.

Yet seemed it now that Sir Robert Græme,  
Ere the King's last breath was o'er,  
Turned sick at heart with the deadly sight  
And would have done no more.

But a cry came from the troop above:  
"If him thou do not slay,  
The price of his life that thou dost spare  
Thy forfeit life shall pay!"

O God! what more did I hear or see,  
Or how should I tell the rest?  
But there at length our King lay slain  
With sixteen wounds in his breast.

O God! and now did a bell boom forth,  
And the murderers turned and fled;—  
Too late, too late, O God, did it sound!—  
And I heard the true men mustering round,  
And the cries and the coming tread.

But ere they came to the black death-gap  
Somewise did I creep and steal;  
And lo! or ever I swooned away,  
Through the dusk I saw where the white face lay  
In the Pit of Fortune's Wheel.

And now, ye Scottish maids who have heard  
Dread things of the days grown old,—  
Even at the last, of true Queen Jane  
May somewhat yet be told,



And how she dealt for her dear lord's sake  
Dire vengeance manifold.

'Twas in the Charterhouse of Perth,  
In the fair-lit Death-chapelle,  
That the slain King's corpse on bier was lain  
With chant and requiem-knell.

And all with royal wealth of balm  
Was the body purified:  
And none could trace on the brow and lips  
The death that he had died.

In his robes of state he lay asleep  
With orb and sceptre in hand;  
And by the crown he wore on his throne  
Was his kingly forehead spann'd.

And, girls, 'twas a sweet sad thing to see  
How the curling golden hair,  
As in the day of the poet's youth,  
From the King's crown clustered there.

And if all had come to pass in the brain  
That throbb'd beneath those curls,  
Then Scots had said in the days to come  
That this their soil was a different home  
And a different Scotland, girls!

And the Queen sat by him night and day,  
And oft she knelt in prayer,  
All wan and pale in the widow's veil  
That shrouded her shining hair.

And I had got good help of my hurt:  
And only to me some sign  
She made; and save the priests that were there  
No face would she see but mine.

And the month of March wore on apace;  
And now fresh couriers fared  
Still from the country of the Wild Scots  
With news of the traitors snared.

And still as I told her day by day,  
Her pallor changed to sight,  
And the frost grew to a furnace-flame  
That burnt her visage white.

And evermore as I brought her word,  
She bent to her dead King James,  
And in the cold ear with fire-drawn breath  
She spoke the traitors' names.

But when the name of Sir Robert Græme  
Was the one she had to give,  
I ran to hold her up from the floor;  
For the froth was on her lips, and sore  
I feared that she could not live.

And the month of March wore nigh to its end,  
And still was the death-pall spread;  
For she would not bury her slaughtered lord  
Till his slayers all were dead.

And now of their dooms dread tidings came,  
And of torments fierce and dire;  
And nought she spake,—she had ceased to speak,—  
But her eyes were a soul on fire.

But when I told her the bitter end  
Of the stern and just award,  
She leaned o'er the bier, and thrice three times  
She kissed the lips of her lord.

And then she said,—“My King, they are dead!”  
And she knelt on the chapel-floor,  
And whispered low with a strange proud smile,—  
“James, James, they suffered more!”

Last she stood up to her queenly height,  
But she shook like an autumn leaf,  
As though the fire wherein she burned  
Then left her body, and all were turned  
To winter of life-long grief.

And "O James!" she said,— "My James!" she said,—  
"Alas for the woful thing,  
That a poet true and a friend of man,  
In desperate days of bale and ban,  
Should needs be born a King!"

716

## LOVESIGHT

WHEN do I see thee most, beloved one?  
When in the light the spirits of mine eyes  
Before thy face, their altar, solemnize  
The worship of that Love through thee made known?  
Or when in the dusk hours, (we two alone,)  
Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies  
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies,  
And my soul only sees thy soul its own?  
O love, my love! if I no more should see  
Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,  
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,—  
How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope  
The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of Hope,  
The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

717

## HEART'S HOPE

By what word's power, the key of paths untrod,  
Shall I the difficult deeps of Love explore,  
Till parted waves of Song yield up the shore  
Even as that sea which Israel crossed dryshod?  
For lo! in some poor rhythmic period,  
Lady, I fain would tell how evermore  
Thy soul I know not from thy body, nor  
Thee from myself, neither our love from God.  
Yea, in God's name, and Love's, and thine, would I

Draw from one loving heart such evidence  
 As to all hearts all things shall signify;  
 Tender as dawn's first hill-fire, and intense  
 As instantaneous penetrating sense,  
 In Spring's birth-hour, of other Springs gone by.

718

## GENIUS IN BEAUTY

BEAUTY like hers is genius. Not the call  
 Of Homer's or of Dante's heart sublime,—  
 Not Michael's hand furrowing the zones of time,—  
 Is more with compassed mysteries musical;  
 Nay, not in Spring's or Summer's sweet footfall  
 More gathered gifts exuberant Life bequeathes  
 Than doth this sovereign face, whose love-spell breathes  
 Even from its shadowed contour on the wall.  
 As many men are poets in their youth,  
 But for one sweet-strung soul the wires prolong  
 Even through all change the indomitable song;  
 So in like wise the envenomed years, whose tooth  
 Rends shallower grace with ruin void of ruth,  
 Upon this beauty's power shall wreak no wrong.

719

## SILENT NOON

YOUR hands lie open in the long, fresh grass,—  
 The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:  
 Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms  
 'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.  
 All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,  
 Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge  
 Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn hedge.  
 'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.  
 Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly  
 Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky,—  
 So this wing'd hour is dropped to us from above.  
 Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,  
 This close-companioned inarticulate hour  
 When twofold silence was the song of love.

720

## LOVE-SWEETNESS

SWEET dimness of her loosened hair's downfall  
About thy face; her sweet hands round thy head  
In gracious fostering union garlanded;  
Her tremulous smiles; her glances' sweet recall  
Of love; her murmuring sighs memorial;  
Her mouth's culled sweetness by thy kisses shed  
On cheeks and neck and eyelids, and so led  
Back to her mouth, which answers there for all:—  
What sweeter than these things, except the thing  
In lacking which all these would lose their sweet:—  
The confident heart's still fervor: the swift beat  
And soft subsidence of the spirit's wing,  
Then when it feels, in cloud-girt wayfaring,  
The breath of kindred plumes against its feet?

721

## HEART'S COMPASS

SOMETIMES thou seem'st not as thyself alone,  
But as the meaning of all things that are;  
A breathless wonder, shadowing forth afar  
Some heavenly solstice hushed and halcyon;  
Whose unstirred lips are music's visible tone;  
Whose eyes the sun-gate of the soul unbar,  
Being of its furthest fires oracular—  
The evident heart of all life sown and mown.  
Even such love is; and is not thy name Love?  
Yea, by thy hand the Love-god rends apart  
All gathering clouds of Night's ambiguous art;  
Flings them far down, and sets thine eyes above;  
And simply, as some gage of flower or glove,  
Stakes with a smile the world against thy heart.

722

## HER GIFTS

HIGH grace, the dower of queens; and therewithal  
Some wood-born wonder's sweet simplicity;  
A glance like water brimming with the sky  
Or hyacinth-light where forest-shadows fall;

Such thrilling pallor of cheek as doth enthrall  
 The heart; a mouth whose passionate forms imply  
 All music and all silence held thereby;  
 Deep golden locks, her sovereign coronal;  
 A round reared neck, meet column of Love's shrine  
 To cling to when the heart takes sanctuary;  
 Hands which for ever at Love's bidding be,  
 And soft-stirred feet still answering to his sign:—  
 These are her gifts, as tongue may tell them o'er.  
 Breathe low her name, my soul; for that means more.

## CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI

[1830-1894]

723

## SONG

WHEN I am dead, my dearest,  
 Sing no sad songs for me;  
 Plant thou no roses at my head,  
 Nor shady cypress tree:  
 Be the green grass above me  
 With showers and dewdrops wet;  
 And if thou wilt, remember,  
 And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,  
 I shall not feel the rain;  
 I shall not hear the nightingale  
 Sing on, as if in pain;  
 And dreaming through the twilight  
 That doth not rise nor set,  
 Haply I may remember,  
 And haply may forget.

724

## REMEMBER

REMEMBER me when I am gone away,  
 Gone far away into the silent land;  
 When you can no more hold me by the hand,  
 Nor I half turn to go, yet turning stay.

Remember me when no more day by day  
You tell me of our future that you plann'd:  
Only remember me; you understand  
It will be late to counsel then or pray.  
Yet if you should forget me for a while  
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:  
For if the darkness and corruption leave  
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,  
Better by far you should forget and smile  
Than that you should remember and be sad.

725

## UP-HILL

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?  
Yes, to the very end.  
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?  
From morn to night, my friend.  
  
But is there for the night a resting-place?  
A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.  
May not the darkness hide it from my face?  
You cannot miss that inn.  
  
Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?  
Those who have gone before.  
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?  
They will not keep you standing at that door.  
  
Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?  
Of labour you shall find the sum.  
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?  
Yea, beds for all who come.

726

## IN THE ROUND TOWER AT JHANSI

*June 8, 1857 (Indian Mutiny)*

A hundred, a thousand to one; even so;  
Not a hope in the world remained:  
The swarming howling wretches below  
Gained and gained and gained.

Skene looked at his pale young wife.  
 'Is the time come?'—'The time is come.'  
 Young, strong, and so full of life,  
 The agony struck them dumb.

Close his arm about her now,  
 Close her cheek to his,  
 Close the pistol to her brow—  
 God forgive them this!

'Will it hurt much?' 'No, mine own:  
 I wish I could bear the pang for both.'—  
 'I wish I could bear the pang alone:  
 Courage, dear, I am not loth.'

Kiss and kiss: 'It is not pain  
 Thus to kiss and die.  
 One kiss more.'—'And yet one again.'—  
 'Good-bye.'—'Good-bye.'

## WILLIAM MORRIS

[1834-1896]

727

## THE DEFENCE OF GUENEVERE

BUT, knowing now that they would have her speak,  
 She threw her wet hair backward from her brow,  
 Her hand close to her mouth touching her cheek,

As though she had had there a shameful blow,  
 And feeling it shameful to feel aught but shame  
 All through her heart, yet felt her cheek burned so,

She must a little touch it; like one lame  
 She walked away from Gauwaine, with her head  
 Still lifted up; and on her cheek of flame

The tears dried quick; she stopped at last and said:  
 "O knights and lords, it seems but little skill  
 To talk of well-known things past now and dead.



"God wot I ought to say, I have done ill,  
And pray you all forgiveness heartily!  
Because you must be right, such great lords; still

"Listen, suppose your time were come to die,  
And you were quite alone and very weak;  
Yea, laid a dying while very mightily

"The wind was ruffling up the narrow streak  
Of river through your broad lands running well:  
Suppose a hush should come, then some one speak:

"One of these cloths is heaven, and one is hell,  
Now choose one cloth for ever; which they be,  
I will not tell you, you must somehow tell

"Of your own strength and mightiness; here, see!  
Yea, yea, my lord, and you to ope your eyes,  
At foot of your familiar bed to see

"A great God's angel standing, with such dyes,  
Not known on earth, on his great wings, and hands,  
Held out two ways, light from the inner skies

"Showing him well, and making his commands  
Seem to be God's commands, moreover, too,  
Holding within his hands the cloths on wands;

"And one of these strange choosing cloths was blue,  
Wavy and long, and one cut short and red;  
No man could tell the better of the two.

"After a shivering half-hour you said:  
'God help! heaven's color, the blue;' and he said, 'hell.'  
Perhaps you would then roll upon your bed,

"And cry to all good men that loved you well,  
'Ah Christ! if only I had known, known, known;'  
Launcelot went away, then I could tell,

"Like wisest man how all things would be, moan,  
And roll and hurt myself, and long to die,  
And yet fear much to die for what was sown.

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,  
Whatever may have happened through these years,  
God knows I speak truth, saying that you lie."

Her voice was low at first, being full of tears,  
But as it cleared, it grew full loud and shrill,  
Growing a windy shriek in all men's ears,

A ringing in their startled brains, until  
She said that Gauwaine lied, then her voice sunk,  
And her great eyes began again to fill,

Though still she stood right up, and never shrunk,  
But spoke on bravely, glorious lady fair!  
Whatever tears her full lips may have drunk,

She stood, and seemed to think, and wrung her hair,  
Spoke out at last with no more trace of shame,  
With passionate twisting of her body there:

"It chanced upon a day that Launcelot came  
To dwell at Arthur's court: at Christmastime  
This happened; when the heralds sung his name,

"Son of King Ban of Benwick, seemed to chime  
Along with all the bells that rang that day,  
O'er the white roofs, with little change of rhyme.

"Christmas and whitened winter passed away,  
And over me the April sunshine came,  
Made very awful with black hail-clouds, yea

"And in the Summer I grew white with flame,  
And bowed my head down: Autumn, and the sick  
Sure knowledge things would never be the same,

"However often Spring might be most thick  
Of blossoms and buds, smote on me, and I grew  
Careless of most things, let the clock tick, tick,

"To my unhappy pulse, that beat right through  
My eager body; while I laughed out loud,  
And let my lips curl up at false or true,

"Seemed cold and shallow without any cloud.  
Behold, my judges, then the cloths were brought;  
While I was dizzied thus, old thoughts would crowd,

"Belonging to the time ere I was bought  
By Arthur's great name and his little love;  
Must I give up for ever then, I thought,

"That which I deemed would ever round me move  
Glorifying all things; for a little word,  
Scarce ever meant at all, must I now prove

"Stone-cold for ever? Pray you, does the Lord  
Will that all folks should be quite happy and good?  
I love God now a little, if this cord

"Were broken, once for all what striving could  
Make me love anything in earth or heaven?  
So day by day it grew, as if one should

"Slip slowly down some path worn smooth and even,  
Down to a cool sea on a summer day;  
Yet still in slipping there was some small leaven

"Of stretched hands catching small stones by the way,  
Until one surely reached the sea at last,  
And felt strange new joy as the worn head lay

"Back, with the hair like sea-weed; yea all past  
Sweat of the forehead, dryness of the lips,  
Washed utterly out by the dear waves o'ercast,

"In the lone sea, far off from any ships!  
Do I not know now of a day in Spring?  
No minute of that wild day ever slips

"From out my memory; I hear thrushes sing,  
And wheresoever I may be, straightway  
Thoughts of it all come up with most fresh sting:

"I was half mad with beauty on that day,  
And went without my ladies all alone,  
In a quiet garden walled round every way;

"I was right joyful of that wall of stone,  
That shut the flowers and trees up with the sky,  
And trebled all the beauty: to the bone,

"Yea right through to my heart, grown very shy  
With wary thoughts, it pierced, and made me glad;  
Exceedingly glad, and I knew verily,

"A little thing just then had made me mad;  
I dared not think, as I was wont to do,  
Sometimes, upon my beauty; If I had

"Held out my long hand up against the blue,  
And, looking on the tenderly darken'd fingers,  
Thought that by rights one ought to see quite through,

"There, see you, where the soft still light yet lingers,  
Round by the edges; what should I have done,  
If this had joined with yellow spotted singers,

"And startling green drawn upward by the sun?  
But shouting, loosed out, see now! all my hair,  
And trancedly stood watching the west wind run

"With faintest half-heard breathing sound: why there  
I lose my head e'en now in doing this;  
But shortly listen: In that garden fair

" Came Launcelot walking; this is true, the kiss  
Wherewith we kissed in meeting that spring day,  
I scarce dare talk of the remember'd bliss,

" When both our mouths went wandering in one way,  
And aching sorely, met among the leaves;  
Our hands being left behind strained far away.

" Never within a yard of my bright sleeves  
Had Launcelot come before: and now so nigh!  
After that day why is it Guenevere grieves?

" Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,  
Whatever happened on through all those years,  
God knows I speak truth, saying that you lie.

" Being such a lady could I weep these tears  
If this were true? A great queen such as I  
Having sinn'd this way, straight her conscience sears;

" And afterwards she liveth hatefully,  
Slaying and poisoning, certes never weeps:  
Gauwaine be friends now, speak me lovingly,

" Do I not see how God's dear pity creeps  
All through your frame, and trembles in your mouth?  
Remember in what grave your mother sleeps,

" Buried in some place far down in the south  
Men are forgetting as I speak to you;  
By her head sever'd in that awful drouth

" Of pity that drew Agravaine's fell blow,  
I pray your pity! let me not scream out  
For ever after, when the shrill winds blow

" Through half your castle-locks! let me not shout  
For ever after in the winter night  
When you ride out alone! in battle-rout

"Let not my rusting tears make your sword light!  
Ah! God of mercy, how he turns away!  
So, ever must I dress me to the fight,

"So: let God's justice work! Gauwaine, I say,  
See me hew down your proofs: yea all men know  
Even as you said how Mellyagraunce one day,

"One bitter day in *la Fausse Garde*, for so  
All good knights held it after, saw:  
Yea, sirs, by cursed unknighly outrage; though

"You, Gauwaine, held his word without a flaw.  
Not so, fair lords, even if the world should end

"This very day, and you were judges here  
Instead of God. Did you see Mellyagraunce  
When Launcelot stood by him? what white fear

"Curdled his blood, and how his teeth did dance,  
His side sink in? as my knight cried and said:  
'Slayer of unarm'd men, here is a chance!

"'Setter of traps, I pray you guard your head,  
By God I am so glad to fight with you,  
Stripper of ladies, that my hand feels lead

"'For driving weight; hurrah now! draw and do,  
For all my wounds are moving in my breast,  
And I am getting mad with waiting so.'

"He struck his hands together o'er the beast,  
Who fell down flat, and grovell'd at his feet,  
And groan'd at being slain so young: 'At least,'

"My knight said, 'Rise you, sir, who are so fleet  
At catching ladies, half-arm'd will I fight,  
My left side all uncovered!' then I weet,

“Up sprang Sir Mellyagraunce with great delight  
Upon his knave's face; not until just then  
Did I quite hate him, as I saw my knight

“Along the lists look to my stake and pen  
With such a joyous smile, it made me sigh  
From agony beneath my waist-chain, when

“The fight began, and to me they drew nigh;  
Ever Sir Launcelot kept him on the right,  
And traversed warily, and ever high

“And fast leapt caitiff's sword, until my knight  
Sudden threw up his sword to his left hand,  
Caught it and swung it; that was all the fight;

“Except a spout of blood on the hot land,  
For it was hottest summer; and I know  
I wonder'd how the fire, while I should stand,

“And burn, against the heat, would quiver so,  
Yards above my head; thus these matters went;  
Which things were only warnings of the woe

“That fell on me. Yet Mellyagraunce was shent,  
For Mellyagraunce had fought against the Lord;  
Therefore, my lords, take heed lest you be blent

“With all his wickedness; say no rash word  
Against me, being so beautiful; my eyes  
Wept all away to gray, may bring some sword

“To drown you in your blood; see my breast rise  
Like waves of purple sea, as here I stand;  
And how my arms are moved in wonderful wise,

“Yea also at my full heart's strong command,  
See through my long throat how the words go up  
In ripples to my mouth; how in my hand

"The shadow lies like wine within a cup  
Of marvellously color'd gold; yea now  
This little wind is rising, look you up,

"And wonder how the light is falling so  
Within my moving tresses: will you dare  
When you have looked a little on my brow,

"To say this thing is vile? or will you care  
For any plausible lies of cunning woof,  
Where you can see my face with no lie there

"For ever? am I not a gracious proof?—  
'But in your chamber Launcelot was found'—  
Is there a good knight then would stand aloof,

"When a queen says with gentle queenly sound:  
'O true as steel, come now and talk with me,  
I love to see your step upon the ground

"Unwavering, also well I love to see  
That gracious smile light up your face, and hear  
Your wonderful words, that all mean verily

"The thing they seem to mean: good friend, so dear  
To me in everything, come here to-night,  
Or else the hours will pass most dull and drear;

"If you come not, I fear this time I might  
Get thinking over much of times gone by,  
When I was young, and green hope was in sight:

"For no man cares now to know why I sigh;  
And no man comes to sing me pleasant songs,  
Nor any brings me the sweet flowers that lie

"So thick in the gardens; therefore one so long  
To see you, Launcelot; that we may be  
Like children once again, free from all wrongs



" 'Just for one night.' Did he not come to me?  
What thing could keep true Launcelot away  
If I said, 'Come?' there was one less than three

" In my quiet room that night, and we were gay;  
Till sudden I rose up, weak, pale, and sick,  
Because a bawling broke our dream up, yea

" I looked at Launcelot's face and could not speak,  
For he looked helpless too, for a little while;  
Then I remember how I tried to shriek,

" And could not, but fell down; from tile to tile  
The stones they threw up rattled o'er my head  
And made me dizzier; till within a while

" My maids were all about me, and my head  
On Launcelot's breast was being soothed away  
From its white chattering, until Launcelot said: . . .

" By God! I will not tell you more to-day,  
Judge any way you will: what matters it?  
You know quite well the story of that fray,

" How Launcelot still'd their bawling, the mad fit  
That caught up Gauwaine, all, all, verily,  
But just that which would save me; these things flit.

" Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,  
Whatever may have happen'd these long years,  
God knows I speak truth, saying that you lie!

" All I have said is truth, by Christ's dear tears."  
She would not speak another word, but stood  
Turn'd sideways; listening, like a man who hears

His brother's trumpet sounding through the wood  
Of his foes' lances. She leaned eagerly,  
And gave a slight spring sometimes, as she could

At last hear something really; joyfully  
Her cheek grew crimson, as the headlong speed  
Of the roan charger drew all men to see,  
The knight who came was Launcelot at good need.

728

## PROLOGUE OF THE EARTHLY PARADISE

OF Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,  
I cannot ease the burden of your fears,  
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,  
Or bring again the pleasure of past years,  
Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears,  
Or hope again for aught that I can say,  
The idle singer of an empty day.

But rather, when aweary of your mirth,  
From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,  
And, feeling kindly unto all the earth,  
Grudge every minute as it passes by,  
Made the more mindful that the sweet days die—  
—Remember me a little then I pray,  
The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care  
That weighs us down who live and earn our bread,  
These idle verses have no power to bear;  
So let me sing of names remembered,  
Because they, living not, can ne'er be dead,  
Or long time take their memory quite away  
From us poor singers of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,  
Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?  
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme  
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,  
Telling a tale not too importunate  
To those who in the sleepy region stay,  
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king  
At Christmas-tide such wondrous things did show,  
That through one window men beheld the spring,  
And through another saw the summer glow,  
And through a third the fruited vines a-row,  
While still, unheard, but in its wonted way,  
Piped the drear wind of that December day.

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,  
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,  
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss  
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,  
Where tossed about all hearts of men must be;  
Whose ravening monsters mighty men shall slay,  
Not the poor singer of an empty day.

729

## THE NYMPH'S SONG TO HYLAS

I KNOW a little garden-close  
Set thick with lily and red rose,  
Where I would wander if I might  
From dewy dawn to dewy night,  
And have one with me wandering.

And though within it no birds sing,  
And though no pillar'd house is there,  
And though the apple boughs are bare  
Of fruit and blossom, would to God,  
Her feet upon the green grass trod,  
And I beheld them as before!

There comes a murmur from the shore,  
And in the place two fair streams are,  
Drawn from the purple hills afar,  
Drawn down unto the restless sea;  
The hills whose flowers ne'er fed the bee,  
The shore no ship has ever seen,  
Still beaten by the billows green,  
Whose murmur comes unceasingly  
Unto the place for which I cry.

For which I cry both day and night,  
For which I let slip all delight,  
That maketh me both deaf and blind,  
Careless to win, unskill'd to find,  
And quick to lose what all men seek.

Yet tottering as I am, and weak,  
Still have I left a little breath  
To seek within the jaws of death  
An entrance to that happy place;  
To seek the unforgotten face  
Once seen, once kiss'd, once reft from me  
Anigh the murmuring of the sea.

730

## THE DAY IS COMING

COME hither, lads, and harken, for a tale there is to tell,  
Of the wonderful days a-coming, when all shall be better  
than well.

And the tale shall be told of a country, a land in the midst  
of the sea,  
And folk shall call it England in the days that are going  
to be.

There more than one in a thousand in the days that are  
yet to come,  
Shall have some hope of the morrow, some joy of the  
ancient home.

For then, laugh not, but listen to this strange tale of mine,  
All folk that are in England shall be better lodged than  
swine.

Then a man shall work and bethink him, and rejoice in the  
deeds of his hand,  
Nor yet come home in the even too faint and weary to  
stand.

Men in that time a-coming shall work and have no fear  
For to-morrow's lack of earning and the hunger-wolf anear.

I tell you this for a wonder, that no man then shall be glad  
Of his fellow's fall and mishap to snatch at the work  
he had.

For that which the worker winneth shall then be his indeed,  
Nor shall half be reaped for nothing by him that sowed  
no seed.

O strange new wonderful justice! But for whom shall we  
gather the gain?  
For ourselves and for each of our fellows, and no hand  
shall labor in vain.

Then all Mine and all Thine shall be Ours, and no more  
shall any man crave  
For riches that serve for nothing but to fetter a friend for  
a slave.

And what wealth then shall be left us when none shall  
gather gold  
To buy his friend in the market, and pinch and pine  
the sold?

Nay, what save the lovely city, and the little house on  
the hill,  
And the wastes and the woodland beauty, and the happy  
fields we till;

And the homes of ancient stories, the tombs of the mighty  
dead;  
And the wise men seeking out marvels, and the poet's  
teeming head;

And the painter's hand of wonder; and the marvelous fiddle-  
bow,  
And the banded choirs of music: all those that do and  
know.

For all these shall be ours and all men's; nor shall any lack  
a share

Of the toil and the gain of living in the days when the  
world grows fair.

Ah! such are the days that shall be! But what are the  
deeds of to-day,  
In the days of the years we dwell in, that wear our lives  
away?

Why, then, and for what are we waiting? There are three  
words to speak;  
WE WILL IT, and what is the foeman but the dream-strong  
wakened and weak?

O why and for what are we waiting? while our brothers  
droop and die,  
And on every wind of the heavens a wasted life goes by.

How long shall they reproach us where crowd on crowd  
they dwell,  
Poor ghosts of the wicked city, the gold-crushed, hungry  
hell?

Through squalid life they labored, in sordid grief they  
died,  
Those sons of a mighty mother, those props of England's  
pride.

They are gone; there is none can undo it, nor save our  
souls from the curse;  
But many a million cometh, and shall they be better or  
worse?

It is we must answer and hasten, and open wide the  
door  
For the rich man's hurrying terror, and the slow-foot hope  
of the poor.

Yea, the voiceless wrath of the wretched, and their un-  
learned discontent,

We must give it voice and wisdom till the waiting-tide  
be spent.

Come, then, since all things call us, the living and the  
dead,

And o'er the weltering tangle a glimmering light is shed.

Come, then, let us cast off fooling, and put by ease and rest,  
For the Cause alone is worthy till the good days bring the  
best.

Come, join in the only battle wherein no man can fail,  
Where whoso fadeth and dieth, yet his deed shall still  
prevail.

Ah! come, cast off all fooling, for this, at least, we know:  
That the Dawn and the Day is coming, and forth the  
Banners go.

731

## THE DAYS THAT WERE

WHILES in the early winter eve  
We pass amid the gathering night  
Some homestead that we had to leave  
Years past; and see its candles bright  
Shine in the room beside the door  
Where we were merry years ago,  
But now must never enter more,  
As still the dark road drives us on.  
E'en so the world of men may turn  
At even of some hurried day  
And see the ancient glimmer burn  
Across the waste that hath no way;  
Then, with that faint light in its eyes,  
Awhile I bid it linger near  
And nurse in waving memories  
The bitter sweet of days that were.

## JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY

[1844-1890]

732

## A WHITE ROSE

THE red rose whispers of passion,  
 And the white rose breathes of love;  
 O, the red rose is a falcon,  
 And the white rose is a dove.

But I send you a cream-white rosebud  
 With a flush on its petal tips;  
 For the love that is purest and sweetest  
 Has a kiss of desire on the lips.

## ARTHUR WILLIAM EDGAR O'SHAUGHNESSY

[1844-1881]

733

## ODE

WE are the music-makers,  
 And we are the dreamers of dreams,  
 Wandering by lone sea-breakers,  
 And sitting by desolate streams;  
 World-losers and world-forsakers,  
 On whom the pale moon gleams:  
 Yet we are the movers and shakers  
 Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties  
 We build up the world's great cities,  
 And out of a fabulous story  
 We fashion an empire's glory:  
 One man with a dream, at pleasure,  
 Shall go forth and conquer a crown;  
 And three with a new song's measure  
 Can trample an empire down.



We, in the ages lying  
In the buried past of the earth,  
Built Nineveh with our sighing,  
And Babel itself with our mirth;  
And o'erthrew them with prophesying  
To the old of the new world's worth;  
For each age is a dream that is dying,  
Or one that is coming to birth.

ROBERT WILLIAMS BUCHANAN

[1841-1901]

734

LIZ

THE crimson light of sunset falls  
Through the grey glamour of the murmuring rain,  
And creeping o'er the housetops crawls  
Through the black smoke upon the broken pane,  
Steals to the straw on which she lies,  
And tints her thin black hair and hollow cheeks,  
Her sun-tanned neck, her glistening eyes,—  
While faintly, sadly, fitfully she speaks.  
But when it is no longer light,  
The pale girl smiles, with only One to mark,  
And dies upon the breast of Night,  
Like trodden snowdrift melting in the dark.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

[1837-1909]

735

CHORUS FROM 'ATALANTA'

WHEN the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,  
The mother of months in meadow or plain  
Fills the shadows and windy places  
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;

And the brown bright nightingale amorous  
Is half assuaged for Itylus,  
For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,  
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers,  
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,  
With a noise of winds and many rivers,  
With a clamour of waters, and with might;  
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,  
Over the splendour and speed of thy feet;  
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,  
Round the feet of the day and the feet of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,  
Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?  
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her,  
Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!  
For the stars and the winds are unto her  
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;  
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,  
And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,  
And all the season of snows and sins;  
The days dividing lover and lover,  
The light that loses, the night that wins;  
And time remember'd is grief forgotten,  
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,  
And in green underwood and cover  
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,  
Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,  
The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes  
From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;  
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,  
And the oat is heard above the lyre,  
And the hoofèd heel of a satyr crushes  
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,  
 Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,  
 Follows with dancing and fills with delight  
 The Mænad and the Bassarid;  
 And soft as lips that laugh and hide  
 The laughing leaves of the trees divide,  
 And screen from seeing and leave in sight  
 The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair  
 Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;  
 The wild vine slipping down leaves bare  
 Her bright breast shortening into sighs;  
 The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,  
 But the berried ivy catches and cleaves  
 To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare  
 The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

736

## ITYLUS

SWALLOW, my sister, O sister swallow,  
 How can thine heart be full of the spring?  
 A thousand summers are over and dead.  
 What hast thou found in the spring to follow?  
 What hast thou found in thine heart to sing?  
 What wilt thou do when the summer is shed?

O swallow, sister, O fair swift swallow,  
 Why wilt thou fly after spring to the south,  
 The soft south whither thine heart is set?  
 Shall not the grief of the old time follow?  
 Shall not the song thereof cleave to thy mouth?  
 Hast thou forgotten ere I forget?

Sister, my sister, O fleet sweet swallow,  
 Thy way is long to the sun and the south;  
 But I, fulfill'd of my heart's desire,  
 Shedding my song upon height, upon hollow,  
 From tawny body and sweet small mouth  
 Feed the heart of the night with fire.

I the nightingale all spring through,  
O swallow, sister, O changing swallow,  
All spring through till the spring be done,  
Clothed with the light of the night on the dew,  
Sing, while the hours and the wild birds follow,  
Take flight and follow and find the sun.

Sister, my sister, O soft light swallow,  
Though all things feast in the spring's guest-chamber.  
How hast thou heart to be glad thereof yet?  
For where thou fliest I shall not follow,  
Till life forget and death remember,  
Till thou remember and I forget.

Swallow, my sister, O singing swallow,  
I know not how thou hast heart to sing.  
Hast thou the heart? is it all past over?  
Thy lord the summer is good to follow,  
And fair the feet of thy lover the spring:  
But what wilt thou say to the spring thy lover?

O swallow, sister, O fleeting swallow,  
My heart in me is a molten ember  
And over my head the waves have met.  
But thou wouldst tarry or I would follow  
Could I forget or thou remember,  
Couldst thou remember and I forget.

O sweet stray sister, O shifting swallow,  
The heart's division divideth us.  
Thy heart is light as a leaf of a tree;  
But mine goes forth among sea-gulfs hollow  
To the place of the slaying of Itylus,  
The feast of Daulis, the Thracian sea.

O swallow, sister, O rapid swallow,  
I pray thee sing not a little space.  
Are not the roofs and the lintels wet?  
The woven web that was plain to follow,  
The small slain body, the flower-like face,  
Can I remember if thou forget?

O sister, sister, thy first-begotten!

The hands that cling and the feet that follow,

The voice of the child's blood crying yet,

*Who hath remember'd me? who hath forgotten?*

Thou hast forgotten, O summer swallow,

But the world shall end when I forget.

737

## THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

HERE, where the world is quiet,

Here, where all trouble seems

Dead winds' and spent waves' riot

In doubtful dreams of dreams;

I watch the green field growing

For reaping folk and sowing,

For harvest time and mowing,

A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,

And men that laugh and weep

Of what may come hereafter

For men that sow to reap:

I am weary of days and hours,

Blown buds of barren flowers,

Desires and dreams and powers

And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,

And far from eye or ear

Wan waves and wet winds labor,

Weak ships and spirits steer;

They drive adrift, and whither

They wot not who make thither;

But no such winds blow hither,

And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,

No heather-flower or vine,

But bloomless buds of poppies,

Green grapes of Proserpine,

Pale beds of blowing rushes  
Where no leaf blooms or blushes,  
Save this whereout she crushes  
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,  
In fruitless fields of corn,  
They bow themselves and slumber  
All night till light is born;  
And like a soul belated,  
In hell and heaven unmated,  
By cloud and mist abated  
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,  
He too with death shall dwell,  
Nor wake with wings in heaven,  
Nor weep for pains in hell;  
Though one were fair as roses,  
His beauty clouds and closes;  
And well though love reposes,  
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,  
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands  
Who gathers all things mortal  
With cold immortal hands;  
Her languid lips are sweeter  
Than love's who fears to greet her  
To men that mix and meet her  
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,  
She waits for all men born;  
Forgets the earth her mother,  
The life of fruits and corn;  
And spring and seed and swallow  
Take wing for her and follow  
Where summer song rings hollow  
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,  
The old loves with wearier wings;  
And all dead years draw thither,  
And all disastrous things;  
Dead dreams of days forsaken  
Blind buds that snows have shaken,  
Wild leaves that winds have taken,  
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,  
And joy was never sure;  
To-day will die to-morrow  
Time stoops to no man's lure;  
And love, grown faint and fretful  
With lips but half regretful  
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful  
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,  
From hope and fear set free,  
We thank with brief thanksgiving  
Whatever gods may be  
That no life lives for ever;  
That dead men rise up never;  
That even the weariest river  
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,  
Nor any change of light:  
Nor sound of waters shaken,  
Nor any sound or sight:  
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,  
Nor days nor things diurnal;  
Only the sleep eternal  
In an eternal night.

738

## A MATCH

If love were what the rose is,  
And I were like the leaf,  
Our lives would grow together  
In sad or singing weather,  
Blown fields or flowerful closes,  
Green pleasure or gray grief;  
If love were what the rose is,  
And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,  
And love were like the tune,  
With double sound and single  
Delight our lips would mingle,  
With kisses glad as birds are  
That get sweet rain at noon;  
If I were what the words are  
And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,  
And I your love were death,  
We'd shine and snow together  
Ere March made sweet the weather  
With daffodil and starling  
And hours of fruitful breath;  
If you were life, my darling,  
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,  
And I were page to joy,  
We'd play for lives and seasons  
With loving looks and treasons  
And tears of night and morrow  
And laughs of maid and boy;  
If you were thrall to sorrow,  
And I were page to joy.



If you were April's lady,  
And I were lord in May,  
We'd throw with leaves for hours  
And draw for days with flowers,  
Till day like night were shady  
And night were bright like day;  
If you were April's lady,  
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,  
And I were king of pain,  
We'd hunt down love together,  
Pluck out his flying-feather,  
And teach his feet a measure,  
And find his mouth a rein;  
If you were queen of pleasure.  
And I were king of pain.

739

## A FORSAKEN GARDEN

IN a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland,  
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee,  
Walled round with rocks as an inland island,  
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.  
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses  
The steep square slope of the blossomless bed  
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves of its  
roses  
Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,  
To the low last edge of the long lone land.  
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,  
Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's hand?  
So long have the gray bare walks lain guestless,  
Through branches and briars if a man make way,  
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless  
Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled  
That crawls by a track none turn to climb  
To the strait waste place that the years have rifled  
Of all but the thorns that are touched not of time.  
The thorns he spares when the rose is taken;  
The rocks are left when he wastes the plain;  
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,  
These remain.

Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that falls not;  
As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are dry;  
From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale calls not,  
Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.  
Over the meadows that blossom and wither,  
Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song.  
Only the sun and the rain come hither  
All year long.

The sun burns sear, and the rain dishevels  
One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.  
Only the wind here hovers and revels  
In a round where life seems barren as death.  
Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,  
Haply, of lovers none ever will know,  
Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping  
Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, "Look thither,"  
Did he whisper? "Look forth from the flowers to the sea;  
For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms wither,  
And men that love lightly may die—But we?"  
And the same wind sang, and the same waves whitened,  
And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,  
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had lightened,  
Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went whither?  
And were one to the end—but what end who knows?  
Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,  
As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.

Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love them?  
What love was ever as deep as a grave?  
They are loveless now as the grass above them  
Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,  
Not known of the cliffs and the fields and the sea.  
Not a breath of the time that has been hovers  
In the air now soft with a summer to be.  
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter  
Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or weep,  
When, as they that are free now of weeping and laughter,  
We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again forever;  
Here ~~change~~ change may come not till all change end.  
From the graves they have made they shall rise up never;  
Who have left naught living to ravage and rend.  
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground growing,  
When the sun and the rain live, these shall be;  
Till a last wind's breath upon all these blowing  
Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,  
Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,  
Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble  
The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink,  
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,  
Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,  
As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,  
Death lies dead.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

[1849-1903]

740

MARGARITÆ SORORI

A LATE lark twitters from the quiet skies:  
And from the west,  
Where the sun, his day's work ended,  
Lingers as in content,

There falls on the old, gray city  
An influence luminous and serene,  
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends  
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires  
Shine, and are changed. In the valley  
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,  
Closing his benediction,  
Sinks, and the darkening air  
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—  
Night with her train of stars  
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!  
My task accomplished and the long day done,  
My wages taken, and in my heart  
Some late lark singing,  
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,  
The sundown splendid and serene,  
Death.

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate;  
I am the captain of my soul.

742

## ENGLAND, MY ENGLAND

ENGLAND, my England?  
What is there I would not do,  
England, my own?  
With your glorious eyes austere,  
As the Lord were walking near,  
Whispering terrible things and dear  
As the Song on your bugles blown,  
England—  
Round the world on your bugles blown!

Where shall the watchful sun,  
England, my England,  
Match the master-work you've done,  
England, my own?  
When shall he rejoice agen  
Such a breed of mighty men  
As come forward, one to ten,  
To the Song on your bugles blown,  
England—  
Down the years on your bugles blown?

Ever the faith endures,  
England, my England:—  
'Take and break us: we are yours,  
England, my own!  
Life is good, and joy runs high  
Between English earth and sky:  
Death is death; but we shall die  
To the Song of your bugles blown,  
England—  
To the stars on your bugles blown!'

They call you proud and hard,  
 England, my England:  
 You with worlds to watch and ward,  
 England, my own!  
 You whose mail'd hand keeps the keys  
 Of such teeming destinies,  
 You could know nor dread nor ease  
 Were the Song on your bugles blown,  
 England—  
 Round the Pit on your bugles blown!

Mother of Ships whose might,  
 England, my England,  
 Is the fierce old Sea's delight,  
 England, my own,  
 Chosen daughter of the Lord,  
 Spouse-in-Chief of the ancient Sword,  
 There's the menace of the Word  
 In the Song on your bugles blown,  
 England—  
 Out of heaven on your bugles blown!

## ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

[1850-1894]

## IN THE HIGHLANDS

In the highlands, in the country places,  
 Where the old plain men have rosy faces,  
 And the young fair maidens  
 Quiet eyes;  
 Where essential silence chills and blesses,  
 And for ever in the hill-recesses  
*Her* more lovely music  
 Broods and dies—

O to mount again where erst I haunted;  
 Where the old red hills are bird-enchanted,

And the low green meadows  
Bright with sward;  
And when even dies, the million-tinted,  
And the night has come, and planets glinted,  
Lo, the valley hollow  
Lamp-bestarr'd!

O to dream, O to awake and wander  
There, and with delight to take and render,  
Through the trance of silence,  
Quiet breath!  
Lo! for there, among the flowers and grasses,  
Only the mightier movement sounds and passes;  
Only winds and rivers,  
Life and death.

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## THE CELESTIAL SURGEON

IF I have faltered more or less  
In my great task of happiness;  
If I have moved among my race  
And shown no glorious morning face;  
If beams from happy human eyes  
Have moved me not; if morning skies,  
Books, and my food, and summer rain  
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain:—  
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take  
And stab my spirit broad awake;  
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,  
Choose thou, before that spirit die,  
A piercing pain, a killing sin,  
And to my dead heart run them in.

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## REQUIEM

UNDER the wide and starry sky,  
Dig the grave and let me lie.  
Glad did I live and gladly die,  
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:  
*Here he lies where he longed to be;*  
*Home is the sailor, home from sea,*  
*And the hunter home from the hill.*

## WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

[1794-1878]

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## THANATOPSIS

To him who in the love of Nature holds  
 Communion with her visible forms, she speaks  
 A various language; for his gayer hours <sup>W</sup>  
 She has a voice of gladness, and a smile  
 And eloquence of beauty, and she glides  
 Into his darker musings, with a mild  
 And healing sympathy, that steals away  
 Their sharpness; ere he is aware. When thoughts  
 Of the last bitter hour come like a blight  
 Over thy spirit, and sad images  
 Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,  
 And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,  
 Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart;—  
 Go forth, under the open sky, and list  
 To Nature's teachings, while from all around—  
 Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—  
 Comes a still voice—Yet a few days, and thee  
 The all-beholding sun shall see no more  
 In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,  
 Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,  
 Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist  
 Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim  
 Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,  
 And, lost each human trace, surrendering up  
 Thine individual being, shalt thou go  
 To mix forever with the elements,  
 To be a brother to the insensible rock  
 And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain  
 Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak  
 Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.



Yet not to thine eternal resting-place  
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish  
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down  
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,  
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,  
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,  
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills  
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales  
Stretching in pensive quietness between;  
The venerable woods—rivers that move  
In majesty, and the complaining brooks  
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all  
Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—  
Are but the solemn decorations all  
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,  
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,  
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,  
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread  
The globe are but a handful to the tribes  
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings  
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,  
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods  
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,  
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there:  
And millions in those solitudes, since first  
The flight of years began, have laid them down  
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone,  
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw  
In silence from the living, and no friend  
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe  
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh  
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care  
Plod on, and each one as before will chase  
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave  
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come  
And make their bed with thee. As the long train  
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,  
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes  
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,  
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man—

Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,  
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

*Death*

So live, that when thy summons comes to join  
The innumerable caravan, which moves  
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take  
His chamber in the silent halls of death,  
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,  
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed  
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,  
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

## ROBERT OF LINCOLN

MERRILY swinging on brier and weed,  
Near to the nest of his little dame,  
Over the mountain-side or mead,  
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,  
Hidden among the summer flowers.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gayly drest,  
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;  
White are his shoulders and white his crest.  
Hear him call in his merry note:  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,  
Sure there was never a bird so fine.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,  
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,  
Passing at home a patient life,  
Broods in the grass while her husband sings:

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear  
Thieves and robbers while I am here.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;  
One weak chirp is her only note.  
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,  
Pouring boasts from his little throat:  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Never was I afraid of man;  
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!  
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,  
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!  
There as the mother sits all day,  
Robert is singing with all his might:  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Nice good wife, that never goes out,  
Keeping house while I frolic about.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,  
Six wide mouths are open for food;  
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,  
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
This new life is likely to be  
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made  
Sober with work, and silent with care;  
Off is his holiday garment laid,  
Half forgotten that merry air:

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Nobody knows but my mate and I  
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;  
Fun and frolic no more he knows;  
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;  
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
When you can pipe that merry old strain,  
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.  
Chee, chee, chee.

## SONG OF MARION'S MEN

OUR band is few but true and tried,  
Our leader frank and bold;  
The British soldier trembles  
When Marion's name is told.  
Our fortress is the good greenwood,  
Our tent the cypress-tree;  
We know the forest round us,  
As seamen know the sea.  
We know its walls of thorny vines,  
Its glades of reedy grass,  
Its safe and silent islands  
Within the dark morass.

Woe to the English soldiery  
That little dread us near!  
On them shall light at midnight  
A strange and sudden fear:  
When, waking to their tents on fire,  
They grasp their arms in vain,  
And they who stand to face us  
Are beat to earth again;

And they who fly in terror deem  
A mighty host behind,  
And hear the tramp of thousands  
Upon the hollow wind.

Then sweet the hour that brings release  
From danger and from toil:  
We talk the battle over,  
And share the battle's spoil.  
The woodland rings with laugh and shout,  
As if a hunt were up,  
And woodland flowers are gathered  
To crown the soldier's cup.  
With merry songs we mock the wind  
That in the pine-top grieves,  
And slumber long and sweetly  
On beds of oaken leaves.

Well knows the fair and friendly moon  
The band that Marion leads—  
The glitter of their rifles,  
The scampering of their steeds.  
'Tis life to guide the fiery barb  
Across the moonlight plain;  
'Tis life to feel the night-wind  
That lifts the tossing mane.  
A moment in the British camp—  
A moment—and away  
Back to the pathless forest,  
Before the peep of day.

Grave men there are by broad Santee,  
Grave men with hoary hairs;  
Their hearts are all with Marion,  
For Marion are their prayers.  
And lovely ladies greet our band  
With kindest welcoming,  
With smiles like those of summer,  
And tears like those of spring.

For them we wear these trusty arms,  
And lay them down no more  
Till we have driven the Briton,  
Forever, from our shore.

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JUNE

I GAZED upon the glorious sky  
And the green mountains round,  
And thought that when I came to lie  
At rest within the ground,  
'Twere pleasant, that in flowery June,  
When brooks send up a cheerful tune,  
And groves a joyous sound,  
The sexton's hand, my grave to make,  
The rich, green mountain-turf should break.

A cell within the frozen mould,  
A coffin borne through sleet,  
And icy clods above it rolled,  
While fierce the tempests beat—  
Away!—I will not think of these—  
Blue be the sky and soft the breeze,  
Earth green beneath the feet,  
And be the damp mould gently pressed  
Into my narrow place of rest.

There through the long, long summer hours,  
The golden light should lie,  
And thick young herbs and groups of flowers  
Stand in their beauty by.  
The oriole should build and tell  
His love-tale close beside my cell;  
The idle butterfly  
Should rest him there, and there be heard  
The housewife bee and humming-bird.

And what if cheerful shouts at noon  
 Come, from the village sent,  
 Or songs of maids, beneath the moon  
 With fairy laughter blent?  
 And what if, in the evening light,  
 Betrothèd lovers walk in sight  
 Of my low monument?  
 I would the lovely scene around  
 Might know no sadder sight nor sound.

I know that I no more should see  
 The season's glorious show,  
 Nor would its brightness shine for me,  
 Nor its wild music flow;  
 But if, around my place of sleep,  
 The friends I love should come to weep,  
 They might not haste to go.  
 Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom  
 Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their softened hearts should bear  
 The thought of what has been,  
 And speak of one who cannot share  
 The gladness of the scene;  
 Whose part, in all the pomp that fills  
 The circuit of the summer hills,  
 Is that his grave is green;  
 And deeply would their hearts rejoice  
 To hear again his living voice.

THOU unrelenting Past!  
 Strong are the barriers round thy dark domain,  
 And fetters, sure and fast,  
 Hold all that enter thy unbreathing reign.

Far in thy realm withdrawn,  
Old empires sit in sullenness and gloom,  
And glorious ages gone  
Lie deep within the shadow of thy womb.

Childhood, with all its mirth,  
Youth, Manhood, Age that draws us to the ground,  
And last, Man's Life on earth,  
Glide to thy dim dominions, and are bound.

Thou hast my better years;  
Thou hast my earlier friends, the good, the kind,  
Yielded to thee with tears—  
The venerable form, the exalted mind.

My spirit yearns to bring  
The lost ones back—yearns with desire intense,  
And struggles hard to wring  
Thy bolts apart, and pluck thy captives thence.

In vain; thy gates deny  
All passage save to those who hence depart;  
Nor to the streaming eye  
Thou giv'st them back—nor to the broken heart.

In thy abysses hide  
Beauty and excellence unknown; to thee  
Earth's wonder and her pride  
Are gathered, as the waters to the sea;

Labors of good to man,  
Unpublished charity, unbroken faith,  
Love, that midst grief began,  
And grew with years, and faltered not in death.

Full many a mighty name  
Lurks in thy depths, unuttered, unrevered;  
With thee are silent fame,  
Forgotten arts, and wisdom disappeared.



Thine for a space are they—  
Yet shalt thou yield thy treasures up at last:  
Thy gates shall yet give way,  
Thy bolts shall fall, inexorable Past!

All that of good and fair  
Has gone into thy womb from earliest time,  
Shall then come forth to wear  
The glory and the beauty of its prime.

They have not perished—no!  
Kind words, remembered voices once so sweet,  
Smiles, radiant long ago,  
And features, the great soul's apparent seat.

All shall come back; each tie  
Of pure affection shall be knit again;  
Alone shall Evil die,  
And Sorrow dwell a prisoner in thy reign.

And then shall I behold  
Him, by whose kind paternal side I sprung,  
And her, who, still and cold,  
Fills the next grave—the beautiful and young.

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## TO A WATERFOWL

WHITHER, midst falling dew,  
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,  
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue  
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye  
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,  
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,  
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink  
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,  
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink  
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care  
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—  
The desert and illimitable air—  
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,  
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,  
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,  
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;  
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,  
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,  
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven  
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart  
Deeply has sunk the lesson thou hast given,  
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,  
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,  
In the long way that I must tread alone,  
Will lead my steps aright.

## THE DEATH OF LINCOLN

OH, slow to smite and swift to spare,  
Gentle and merciful and just!  
Who, in the fear of God, didst bear  
The sword of power, a nation's trust!

In sorrow by thy bier we stand,  
Amid the awe that hushes all,  
And speak the anguish of a land  
That shook with horror at thy fall.

Thy task is done; the bond are free:  
We bear thee to an honored grave,  
Whose proudest monument shall be  
The broken fetters of the slave.

Pure was thy life; its bloody close  
 Hath placed thee with the sons of light,  
 Among the noble host of those  
 Who perished in the cause of Right.

*April, 1865.*

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

[1809-1849]

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LENORE

AH, broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown forever!  
 Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river;  
 And, Guy De Vere, hast *thou* no tear?—weep now or never  
 more!

See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenore!  
 Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral song be  
 sung!—

An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young—  
 A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.

‘Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her for  
 her pride,

‘And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her—that  
 she died!

‘How *shall* the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem how be  
 sung

‘By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours, the slanderous  
 tongue

‘That did to death the innocence that died, and died so  
 young?’

*Peccavimus*; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song

Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no wrong!

The sweet Lenore hath ‘gone before,’ with Hope, that flew  
 beside,

Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have been  
 thy bride—

For her, the fair and *debonair*, that now so lowly lies,  
 The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes—  
 The life still there, upon her hair—the death upon her eyes.

‘Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I  
 upraise.

‘But waft the angel on her flight with a pæan of old days!

‘Let *no* bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed  
 mirth,

‘Should catch the note, as it doth float up from the damnèd  
 Earth.

‘To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant ghost is  
 riven—

‘From Hell unto a high estate far up within the Heaven—

‘From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the King  
 of Heaven.’

IN the greenest of our valleys  
 By good angels tenanted,  
 Once a fair and stately palace—  
 Radiant palace—reared its head.  
 In the monarch Thought’s dominion—  
 It stood there!  
 Never seraph spread a pinion  
 Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,  
 On its roof did float and flow,  
 (This—all this—was in the olden  
 Time long ago,)  
 And every gentle air that dallied,  
 In that sweet day,  
 Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,  
 A wingèd odor went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,  
 Through two luminous windows, saw  
 Spirits moving musically,  
 To a lute’s well-tunèd law,

Round about a throne where, sitting,  
    (PorphYROGENE!)  
In state his glory well befitting,  
    The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing  
    Was the fair palace door,  
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing  
    And sparkling evermore,  
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty  
    Was but to sing,  
In voices of surpassing beauty,  
    The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,  
    Assailed the monarch's high estate.  
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow  
    Shall dawn upon him desolate!)

And round about his home the glory  
    That blushed and bloomed,  
Is but a dim-remembered story  
    Of the old time entombed.

And travellers, now, within that valley,  
    Through the red-litten windows see  
Vast forms, that move fantastically  
    To a discordant melody,  
While, like a ghastly rapid river,  
    Through the pale door  
A hideous throng rush out forever  
    And laugh—but smile no more.

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## TO HELEN

HELEN, thy beauty is to me  
    Like those Nicéan barks of yore,  
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,  
    The weary, way-worn wanderer bore  
    To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,  
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,  
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home  
To the glory that was Greece,  
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche  
How statue-like I see thee stand,  
The agate lamp within thy hand!  
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which  
Are Holy-Land!

756

## THE RAVEN

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—  
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,  
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  
'Tis some visitor,' I muttered, 'tapping at my chamber door—  
Only this and nothing more.'

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;  
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.  
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow  
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—  
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—  
Nameless *here* for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain  
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt  
before;

So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating

'Tis some visiter entreating entrance at my chamber door—  
Some late visiter entreating entrance at my chamber door;—  
This it is and nothing more.'

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,  
'Sir,' said I, 'or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;  
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,

And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,

That I scarce was sure I heard you'—here I opened wide the door;

Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,

Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;

But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,

And the only word there spoken was the whispered word,  
'Lenore!'

This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word  
'Lenore!'

Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,

Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.

'Surely,' said I, 'surely that is something at my window lattice;

Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—

Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—

'Tis the wind and nothing more!'

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter

In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.

Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or  
stayed he;

But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber  
door—

Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—  
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,  
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,  
'Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,' I said, 'art  
sure no craven,

Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly  
shore—

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian  
shore!

Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore.'

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so  
plainly,

Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;  
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being  
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber  
door—

Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber  
door,

With such name as 'Nevermore.'

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only  
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did out-  
pour.

Nothing farther then he uttered—not a feather then he  
fluttered—

Till I scarcely more than muttered 'Other friends have  
flown before—

On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my hopes have flown  
before.'

Then the bird said 'Nevermore.'

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,  
'Doubtless,' said I, 'what it utters is its only stock and store



Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful  
Disaster  
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden  
bore—  
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore  
Of "Never—nevermore."

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,  
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and bust  
and door;  
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking  
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—  
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird  
of yore  
Meant in croaking 'Nevermore.'

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing  
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's  
core;  
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining  
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated  
o'er,  
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating  
o'er,  
*She* shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an  
unseen censer  
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted  
floor.  
'Wretch,' I cried, 'thy God hath lent thee—by these angels  
he hath sent thee  
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore;  
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost  
Lenore!'  
Quoth the Raven 'Nevermore.'

'Prophet!' said I, 'thing of evil! prophet still, if bird or  
devil!—  
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here  
ashore,

Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—  
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—  
Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I  
implore!’

Quoth the Raven ‘Nevermore.’

‘Prophet!’ said I, ‘thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or  
devil!

By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both  
adore—

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant  
Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name  
Lenore—

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name  
Lenore.’

Quoth the Raven ‘Nevermore.’

‘Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!’ I shrieked,  
upstarting—

‘Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s Plutonian  
shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath  
spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my  
door!

Take thy beak **from** out my heart, and take thy form from  
off my door!’

Quoth the Raven ‘Nevermore.’

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, *still* is sitting  
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber  
door;

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon’s that is  
dreaming,

And the lamp-light o’er him streaming throws his shadow  
on the floor;

And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on  
the floor

Shall be lifted—nevermore!

757

## ULALUME

THE skies they were ashen and sober ;  
The leaves they were crisped and sere—  
The leaves they were withering and sere ;  
It was night in the lonesome October  
Of my most immemorial year ;  
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
In the misty mid region of Weir—  
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,  
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic,  
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—  
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.  
These were days when my heart was volcanic  
As the scoriac rivers that roll—  
As the lavas that restlessly roll  
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek  
In the ultimate climes of the pole—  
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek  
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,  
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—  
Our memories were treacherous and sere—  
For we knew not the month was October,  
And we marked not the night of the year—  
(Ah, night of all nights in the year !)  
We noted not the dim lake of Auber—  
(Though once we had journeyed down here)—  
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,  
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent  
And star-dials pointed to morn—  
As the star-dials hinted of morn—  
At the end of our path a liquescent  
And nebulous lustre was born,

Out of which a miraculous crescent  
Arose with a duplicate horn—  
Astarte's bediamonded crescent  
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—'She is warmer than Dian:  
She rolls through an ether of sighs—  
She revels in a region of sighs:  
She has seen that the tears are not dry on  
These cheeks, where the worm never dies  
And has come past the stars of the Lion  
To point us the path to the skies—  
To the Lethean peace of the skies—  
Come up, in despite of the Lion,  
To shine on us with her bright eyes—  
Come up through the lair of the Lion,  
With love in her luminous eyes.'

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,  
Said—'Sadly this star I mistrust—  
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:—  
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!  
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must.'  
In terror she spoke, letting sink her  
Wings until they trailed in the dust—  
In agony sobbed, letting sink her  
Plumes till they trailed in the dust—  
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—'This is nothing but dreaming:  
Let us on by this tremulous light!  
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!  
Its Sibyllic splendor is beaming  
With Hope and in Beauty to-night:—  
See!—it flickers up the sky through the night!  
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,  
And be sure it will lead us aright—  
We safely may trust to a gleaming  
That cannot but guide us aright,  
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night.'

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,  
And tempted her out of her gloom—  
And conquered her scruples and gloom;  
And we passed to the end of the vista,  
But were stopped by the door of a tomb—  
By the door of a legended tomb;  
And I said—‘What is written, sweet sister,  
On the door of this legended tomb?’  
She replied—‘Ulalume—Ulalume—  
’Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!’

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober  
As the leaves that were crisped and sere—  
As the leaves that were withering and sere,  
And I cried—‘It was surely October  
On *this* very night of last year  
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here—  
That I brought a dread burden down here—  
On this night of all nights in the year,  
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?  
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber—  
This misty mid region of Weir—  
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,  
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.’

758

## THE BELLS

## I

HEAR the sledges with the bells—  
Silver bells!  
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!  
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,  
In the icy air of night!  
While the stars that oversprinkle  
All the heavens, seem to twinkle  
With a crystalline delight;  
Keeping time, time, time,  
In a sort of Runic rhyme,

To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells  
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells—  
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

## II

Hear the mellow wedding bells—  
Golden bells!  
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!  
Through the balmy air of night  
How they ring out their delight!—  
From the molten-golden notes,  
And all in tune,  
What a liquid ditty floats  
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats  
On the moon!  
Oh, from out the sounding cells,  
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!  
How it swells!  
How it dwells  
On the Future!—how it tells  
Of the rapture that impels  
To the swinging and the ringing  
Of the bells, bells, bells—  
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells—  
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

## III

Hear the loud alarum bells—  
Brazen bells!  
What a tale of terror, now their turbulence tells!  
In the startled ear of night  
How they scream out their affright!  
Too much horrified to speak,  
They can only shriek, shriek,  
Out of tune,

In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,  
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,  
    Leaping higher, higher, higher,  
    With a desperate desire,  
    And a resolute endeavor  
Now—now to sit, or never,  
By the side of the pale-faced moon.  
    Oh, the bells, bells, bells!  
    What a tale their terror tells  
    Of Despair!  
How they clang, and clash, and roar!  
What a horror they outpour  
On the bosom of the palpitating air!  
    Yet the ear, it fully knows,  
    By the twanging,  
    And the clanging,  
    How the danger ebbs and flows;  
Yet the ear distinctly tells,  
    In the jangling,  
    And the wrangling,  
How the danger sinks and swells,  
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells—  
    Of the bells—  
    Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
    Bells, bells, bells—  
In the clamor and the clanging of the bells!

## IV

Hear the tolling of the bells—  
    Iron bells!  
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!  
    In the silence of the night,  
    How we shiver with affright  
At the melancholy menace of their tone!  
    For every sound that floats  
    From the rust within their throats  
    Is a groan.  
And the people—ah, the people—  
They that dwell up in the steeple,

All alone,  
 And who, tolling, tolling, tolling,  
 In that muffled monotone,  
 Feel a glory in so rolling  
 On the human heart a stone—  
 They are neither man nor woman—  
 They are neither brute nor human—  
 They are Ghouls:—  
 And their king it is who tolls:—  
 And he rolls, rolls, rolls,  
 Rolls

A pæan from the bells!  
 And his merry bosom swells  
 With the pæan of the bells!  
 And he dances, and he yells;  
 Keeping time, time, time,  
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
 To the pæan of the bells:—  
 Of the bells:  
 Keeping time, time, time  
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
 To the throbbing of the bells—  
 Of the bells, bells, bells—  
 To the sobbing of the bells:—  
 Keeping time, time, time,  
 As he knells, knells, knells,  
 In a happy Runic rhyme,  
 To the rolling of the bells—  
 Of the bells, bells, bells:—  
 To the tolling of the bells—  
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
 Bells, bells, bells—

To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

BECAUSE I feel that, in the Heavens above,  
 The angels, whispering to one another,  
 Can find, among their burning terms of love,  
 None so devotional as that of 'Mother,'



Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—  
You who are more than mother unto me,  
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed you,  
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.  
My mother—my own mother, who died early,  
Was but the mother of myself; but you  
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,  
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew  
By that infinity with which my wife  
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

760

## FOR ANNIE

THANK Heaven! the crisis—  
The danger is past,  
And the lingering illness  
Is over at last—  
And the fever called 'Living'  
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know  
I am shorn of my strength,  
And no muscle I move  
As I lie at full length—  
But no matter!—I feel  
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly  
Now, in my bed,  
That any beholder  
Might fancy me dead—  
Might start at beholding me,  
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,  
The sighing and sobbing,  
Are quieted now,  
With that horrible throbbing  
At heart:—ah that horrible,  
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—  
The pitiless pain—  
Have ceased with the fever  
That maddened my brain—  
With the fever called ‘Living’  
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures  
That torture the worst  
Has abated—the terrible  
Torture of thirst  
For the naphthaline river  
Of Passion accurst:—  
I have drank of a water  
That quenches all thirst:—

Of a water that flows,  
With a lullaby sound,  
From a spring but a very few  
Feet under ground—  
From a cavern not very far  
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never  
Be foolishly said  
That my room it is gloomy  
And narrow my bed;  
For a man never slept  
In a different bed—  
And, to sleep, you must slumber  
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit  
Here blandly reposes,  
Forgetting, or never  
Regretting, its roses—  
Its old agitations  
Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly  
Lying, it fancies  
A holier odor  
About it, of pansies—  
A rosemary odor,  
Commingled with pansies—  
With rue and the beautiful  
Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,  
Bathing in many  
A dream of the truth  
And the beauty of Annie—  
Drowned in a bath  
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,  
She fondly caressed,  
And then I fell gently  
To sleep on her breast—  
Deeply to sleep  
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,  
She covered me warm,  
And she prayed to the angels  
To keep me from harm—  
To the queen of the angels  
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,  
Now, in my bed,  
(Knowing her love)  
That you fancy me dead—  
And I rest so contentedly,  
Now, in my bed,  
(With her love at my breast)  
That you fancy me dead—  
That you shudder to look at me,  
Thinking me dead:—

But my heart it is brighter  
Than all of the many  
Stars of the sky,  
For it sparkles with Annie—  
It glows with the light  
Of the love of my Annie—  
With the thought of the light  
Of the eyes of my Annie.

761

## ANNABEL LEE

It was many and many a year ago,  
In a kingdom by the sea  
That a maiden there lived whom you may know  
By the name of ANNABEL LEE;  
And this maiden she lived with no other thought  
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,  
In this kingdom by the sea,  
But we loved with a love that was more than love—  
I and my ANNABEL LEE—  
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of heaven  
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,  
In this kingdom by the sea,  
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling  
My beautiful ANNABEL LEE;  
So that her high-born kinsmen came  
And bore her away from me,  
To shut her up in a sepulchre  
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,  
Went envying her and me—  
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,  
In this kingdom by the sea)  
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,  
Chilling and killing my ANNABEL LEE.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love  
Of those who were older than we—  
Of many far wiser than we—  
And neither the angels in heaven above,  
Nor the demons down under the sea,  
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul  
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams  
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE,  
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes  
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:  
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side  
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,  
In the sepulchre there by the sea—  
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

762

## THE CONQUEROR WORM

Lo! 't is a gala night  
Within the lonesome latter years!  
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight  
In veils, and drowned in tears,  
Sit in a theatre, to see  
A play of hopes and fears,  
While the orchestra breathes fitfully  
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,  
Mutter and mumble low,  
And hither and thither fly—  
Mere puppets they, who come and go  
At bidding of vast formless things  
That shift the scenery to and fro,  
Flapping from out their Condor wings  
Invisible Woe!

That motley drama—oh, be sure  
It shall not be forgot!  
With its Phantom chased for evermore,  
By a crowd that seize it not,

Through a circle that ever returneth in  
 To the self-same spot,  
 And much of Madness, and more of Sin,  
 And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout  
 A crawling shape intrude!  
 A blood-red thing that writhes from out  
 The scenic solitude!  
 It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs  
 The mimes become its food,  
 And seraphs sob at vermin fangs  
 In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!  
 And, over each quivering form,  
 The curtain, a funeral pall,  
 Comes down with the rush of a storm,  
 While the angels, all pallid and wan,  
 Uprising, unveiling, affirm  
 That the play is the tragedy, ‘Man,’  
 And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

## RALPH WALDO EMERSON

[1803-1882]

763

## GOOD-BYE

GOOD-BYE, proud world! I'm going home:  
 Thou art not my friend, and I'm not thine.  
 Long through thy weary crowds I roam;  
 A river-ark on the ocean brine,  
 Long I've been tossed like the driven foam;  
 But now, proud world! I'm going home.

Good-bye to Flattery's fawning face;  
 To Grandeur with his wise grimace;  
 To upstart Wealth's averted eye;  
 To supple Office, low and high;

To crowded halls, to court and street;  
To frozen hearts and hasting feet;  
To those who go, and those who come;  
Good-bye, proud world! I'm going home.

I am going to my own hearth-stone,  
Bosomed in yon green hills alone,—  
A secret nook in a pleasant land,  
Whose groves the frolic fairies planned;  
Where arches green, the livelong day,  
Echo the blackbird's roundelay,  
And vulgar feet have never trod  
A spot that is sacred to thought and God.

O, when I am safe in my sylvan home,  
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome;  
And when I am stretched beneath the pines,  
Where the evening star so holy shines,  
I laugh at the lore and the pride of man,  
At the sophist schools and the learned clan;  
For what are they all, in their high conceit,  
When man in the bush with God may meet?

764

## THE APOLOGY

THINK me not unkind and rude  
That I walk alone in grove and glen;  
I go to the god of the wood  
To fetch his word to men.

Tax not my sloth that I  
Fold my arms beside the brook;  
Each cloud that floated in the sky  
Writes a letter in my book.

Chide me not, laborious band,  
For the idle flowers I brought;  
Every aster in my hand  
Goes home loaded with a thought.

There was never mystery  
 But 't is figured in the flowers;  
 Was never secret history  
 But birds tell it in the bowers.

One harvest from thy field  
 Homeward brought the oxen strong;  
 A second crop thine acres yield,  
 Which I gather in a song.

765

## BRAHMA

If the red slayer think he slays,  
 Or if the slain think he is slain,  
 They know not well the subtle ways  
 I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;  
 Shadow and sunlight are the same;  
 The vanished gods to me appear;  
 And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;  
 When me they fly, I am the wings;  
 I am the doubter and the doubt,  
 And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,  
 And pine in vain the sacred Seven;  
 But thou, meek lover of the good!  
 Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

766

## DAYS

DAUGHTERS of Time, the hypocritic Days,  
 Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,  
 And marching single in an endless file,  
 Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.



To each they offer gifts after his will,  
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.  
I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,  
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily  
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day  
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,  
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

767

## GIVE ALL TO LOVE

GIVE all to love;  
Obey thy heart;  
Friends, kindred, days,  
Estate, good-fame,  
Plans, credit and the Muse,—  
Nothing refuse.

'T is a brave master;  
Let it have scope:  
Follow it utterly,  
Hope beyond hope:  
High and more high  
It dives into noon,  
With wing unspent,  
Untold intent;  
But it is a god,  
Knows its own path  
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;  
It requireth courage stout.  
Souls above doubt,  
Valor unbending,  
It will reward,—  
They shall return  
More than they were,  
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;  
Yet, hear me, yet,

One word more thy heart behoved,  
 One pulse more of firm endeavor,—  
 Keep thee to-day,  
 To-morrow, forever,  
 Free as an Arab  
 Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;  
 But when the surprise,  
 First vague shadow of surmise  
 Flits across her bosom young,  
 Of a joy apart from thee,  
 Free be she, fancy-free;  
 Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,  
 Nor the palest rose she flung  
 From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,  
 As a self of purer clay,  
 Though her parting dims the day,  
 Stealing grace from all alive;  
 Heartily know,  
 When half-gods go,  
 The gods arrive.

*Sung at the Completion of the Battle Monument, July 4, 1837*

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,  
 Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,  
 Here once the embattled farmers stood  
 And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;  
 Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;  
 And Time the ruined bridge has swept  
 Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,  
We set to-day a votive stone;  
That memory may their deed redeem,  
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare  
To die, and leave their children free,  
Bid Time and Nature gently spare  
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

769

## THE HUMBLE-BEE

BURLY, dozing humble-bee,  
Where thou art is clime for me.  
Let them sail for Porto Rique,  
Far-off heats through seas to seek;  
I will follow thee alone,  
Thou animated torrid-zone!  
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,  
Let me chase thy waving lines;  
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,  
Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,  
Joy of thy dominion!  
Sailor of the atmosphere;  
Swimmer through the waves of air;  
Voyager of light and noon;  
Epicurean of June;  
Wait, I prithee, till I come  
Within earshot of thy hum,—  
All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,  
With a net of shining haze  
Silvers the horizon wall,  
And with softness touching all,  
Tints the human countenance  
With a color of romance,

And infusing subtle heats,  
Turns the sod to violets,  
Thou, in sunny solitudes,  
Rover of the underwoods,  
The green silence dost displace  
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,  
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone  
Tells of countless sunny hours,  
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;  
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound  
In Indian wildernesses found;  
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,  
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavory or unclean  
Hath my insect never seen;  
But violets and bilberry bells,  
Maple-sap and daffodels,  
Grass with green flag half-mast high,  
Succory to match the sky,  
Columbine with horn of honey,  
Scented fern, and agrimony,  
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue  
And brier-roses, dwelt among;  
All beside was unknown waste,  
All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,  
Yellow-breeched philosopher!  
Seeing only what is fair,  
Sipping only what is sweet,  
Thou dost mock at fate and care,  
Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.  
When the fierce northwestern blast  
Cools sea and land so far and fast,  
Thou already slumberest deep;  
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;  
Want and woe, which torture us,  
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

770

## THE PROBLEM

I LIKE a church; I like a cowl;  
I love a prophet of the soul;  
And on my heart monastic aisles  
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles;  
Yet not for all his faith can see  
Would I that cowlèd churchman be.

Why should the vest on him allure,  
Which I could not on me endure?

Not from a vain or shallow thought  
His awful Jove young Phidias brought;  
Never from lips of cunning fell  
The thrilling Delphic oracle;  
Out from the heart of nature rolled  
The burdens of the Bible old;  
The litanies of nations came,  
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,  
Up from the burning core below,—  
The canticles of love and woe:  
The hand that rounded Peter's dome  
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome  
Wrought in a sad sincerity:  
Himself from God he could not free;  
He builded better than he knew;—  
The conscious stone to beauty grew.  
Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's nest  
Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?  
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,  
Painting with morn her annual cell?  
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds  
To her old leaves new myriads?  
Such and so grew these holy piles,  
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.  
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,  
As the best gem upon her zone,

And Morning opes with haste her lids  
To gaze upon the Pyramids;  
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,  
As on its friends, with kindred eye;  
For out of Thought's interior sphere  
These wonders rose to upper air;  
And Nature gladly gave them place,  
Adopted them into her race,  
And granted them an equal date  
With Andes and with Ararat.  
These temples grew as grows the grass;  
Art might obey, but not surpass.  
The passive Master lent his hand  
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;  
And the same power that reared the shrine  
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.  
Ever the fiery Pentecost  
Girds with one flame the countless host,  
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,  
And through the priest the mind inspires.  
The word unto the prophet spoken  
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;  
The word by seers or sibyls told,  
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,  
Still floats upon the morning wind,  
Still whispers to the willing mind.  
One accent of the Holy Ghost  
The heedless world hath never lost.  
I know what say the fathers wise,  
The Book itself before me lies,  
Old *Chrysostom*, best Augustine,  
And he who blent both in his line,  
The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,  
Taylor, the Shakspeare of divines.  
His words are music in my ear,  
I see his cowlèd portrait dear;  
And yet, for all his faith could see,  
I would not the good bishop be.

## WOODNOTES

## I

## 1

WHEN the pine tosses its cones  
To the song of its waterfall tones,  
Who speeds to the woodland walks?  
To birds and trees who talks?  
Cæsar of his leafy Rome,  
There the poet is at home.  
He goes to the river-side,—  
Not hook nor line hath he;  
He stands in the meadows wide,—  
Nor gun nor scythe to see.  
Sure some god his eye enchants:  
What he knows nobody wants.  
In the wood he travels glad,  
Without better fortune had,  
Melancholy without bad.  
Knowledge this man prizes best  
Seems fantastic to the rest:  
Pondering shadows, colors, clouds,  
Grass-buds and caterpillar-shrouds,  
Boughs on which the wild bees settle,  
Tints that spot the violet's petal,  
Why Nature loves the number five,  
And why the star-form she repeats:  
Lover of all things alive,  
Wonderer at all he meets,  
Wonderer chiefly at himself,  
Who can tell him what he is?  
Or how meet in human elf  
Coming and past eternities?

## 2

And such I knew, a forest seer,  
A minstrel of the natural year,  
Foreteller of the vernal ides,  
Wise harbinger of spheres and tides,

A lover true, who knew by heart  
Each joy the mountain dales impart;  
It seemed that Nature could not raise  
A plant in any secret place,  
In quaking bog, on snowy hill,  
Beneath the grass that shades the rill,  
Under the snow, between the rocks,  
In damp fields known to bird and fox,  
But he would come in the very hour  
It opened in its virgin bower,  
As if a sunbeam showed the place,  
And tell its long-descended race.  
It seemed as if the breezes brought him,  
It seemed as if the sparrows taught him;  
As if by secret sight he knew  
Where, in far fields, the orchis grew.  
Many haps fall in the field  
Seldom seen by wishful eyes,  
But all her shows did Nature yield,  
To please and win this pilgrim wise.  
He saw the partridge drum in the woods;  
He heard the woodcock's evening hymn;  
He found the tawny thrushes' broods;  
And the shy hawk did wait for him;  
What others did at distance hear,  
And guessed within the thicket's gloom,  
Was shown to this philosopher,  
And at his bidding seemed to come.

## 3

In unploughed Maine he sought the lumberers' gang  
Where from a hundred lakes young rivers sprang;  
He trode the unplanted forest floor, whereon  
The all-seeing sun for ages hath not shone;  
Where feeds the moose, and walks the surly bear,  
And up the tall mast runs the woodpecker.  
He saw beneath dim aisles, in odorous beds,  
The slight Linnæa hang its twin-born heads,  
And blessed the monument of the man of flowers,



Which breathes his sweet fame through the northern bowers.  
He heard, when in the grove, at intervals,  
With sudden roar the aged pine-tree falls,—  
One crash, the death-hymn of the perfect tree,  
Declares the close of its green century.  
Low lies the plant to whose creation went  
Sweet influence from every element;  
Whose living towers the years conspired to build,  
Whose giddy top the morning loved to gild.  
Through these green tents, by eldest Nature dressed,  
He roamed, content alike with man and beast.  
Where darkness found him he lay glad at night;  
There the red morning touched him with its light.  
Three moons his great heart him a hermit made,  
So long he roved at will the boundless shade.  
The timid it concerns to ask their way,  
And fear what foe in caves and swamps can stray,  
To make no step until the event is known,  
And ills to come as evils past bemoan.  
Not so the wise; no coward watch he keeps  
To spy what danger on his pathway creeps;  
Go where he will, the wise man is at home,  
His hearth the earth,—his hall the azure dome;  
Where his clear spirit leads him, there's his road  
By God's own light illumined and foreshowed.

## 4

'T was one of the charmèd days  
When the genius of God doth flow;  
The wind may alter twenty ways,  
A tempest cannot blow;  
It may blow north, it still is warm;  
Or south, it still is clear;  
Or east, it smells like a clover-farm;  
Or west, no thunder fear.  
The musing peasant, lowly great,  
Beside the forest water sate;  
The rope-like pine-roots crosswise grown  
Composed the network of his throne;

The wide lake, edged with sand and grass,  
Was burnished to a floor of glass,  
Painted with shadows green and proud  
Of the tree and of the cloud.  
He was the heart of all the scene;  
On him the sun looked more serene;  
To hill and cloud his face was known,—  
It seemed the likeness of their own;  
They knew by secret sympathy  
The public child of earth and sky.  
'You ask,' he said, 'what guide  
Me through trackless thickets led,  
Through thick-stemmed woodlands rough and wide.  
I found the water's bed.  
The watercourses were my guide;  
I travelled grateful by their side,  
Or through their channel dry;  
They led me through the thicket damp,  
Through brake and fern, the beavers' camp,  
Through beds of granite cut my road,  
And their resistless friendship showed.  
The falling waters led me,  
The foodful waters fed me,  
And brought me to the lowest land,  
Unerring to the ocean sand.  
The moss upon the forest bark  
Was pole-star when the night was dark;  
The purple berries in the wood  
Supplied me necessary food;  
For Nature ever faithful is  
To such as trust her faithfulness.  
When the forest shall mislead me,  
When the night and morning lie,  
When sea and land refuse to feed me,  
'T will be time enough to die;  
Then will yet my mother yield  
A pillow in her greenest field,  
Nor the June flowers scorn to cover  
The clay of their departed lover.'

## WOODNOTES

## II

*As sunbeams stream through liberal space  
And nothing jostle or displace,  
So waved the pine-tree through my thought  
And fanned the dreams it never brought.*

‘Whether is better, the gift or the donor?  
Come to me,’  
Quoth the pine-tree,  
‘I am the giver of honor.  
My garden is the cloven rock,  
And my manure the snow;  
And drifting sand-heaps feed my stock,  
In summer’s scorching glow.  
He is great who can live by me:  
The rough and bearded forester  
Is better than the lord;  
God fills the scrip and canister,  
Sin piles the loaded board.  
The lord is the peasant that was,  
The peasant the lord that shall be;  
The lord is hay, the peasant grass,  
One dry, and one the living tree.  
Who liveth by the ragged pine  
Foundeth a heroic line;  
Who liveth in the palace hall  
Waneth fast and spendeth all.  
He goes to my savage haunts,  
With his chariot and his care;  
My twilight realm he disenchants,  
And finds his prison there.

‘What prizes the town and the tower?  
Only what the pine-tree yields;  
Sinew that subdued the fields;  
The wild-eyed boy, who in the woods  
Chants his hymn to hills and floods,

Whom the city's poisoning spleen  
Made not pale, or fat, or lean;  
Whom the rain and the wind purgeth,  
Whom the dawn and the day-star urgeth,  
In whose cheek the rose-leaf blusheth,  
In whose feet the lion rusheth  
Iron arms, and iron mould,  
That know not fear, fatigue, or cold.  
I give my rafters to his boat,  
My billets to his boiler's throat,  
And I will swim the ancient sea  
To float my child to victory,  
And grant to dwellers with the pine  
Dominion o'er the palm and vine.  
Who leaves the pine-tree, leaves his friend,  
Unnerves his strength, invites his end.  
Cut a bough from my parent stem,  
And dip it in thy porcelain vase;  
A little while each russet gem  
Will swell and rise with wonted grace;  
But when it seeks enlarged supplies,  
The orphan of the forest dies.  
Whoso walks in solitude  
And inhabiteth the wood,  
Choosing light, wave, rock and bird,  
Before the money-loving herd,  
Into that forester shall pass,  
From these companions, power and grace.  
Clean shall he be, without, within,  
From the old adhering sin,  
All ill dissolving in the light  
Of his triumphant piercing sight:  
Not vain, sour, nor frivolous;  
Not mad, athirst, nor garrulous;  
Grave, chaste, contented, though retired,  
And of all other men desired.  
On him the light of star and moon  
Shall fall with purer radiance down;  
All constellations of the sky  
Shed their virtue through his eye.

Him Nature giveth for defence  
His formidable innocence;  
The mountain sap, the shells, the sea,  
All spheres, all stones, his helpers be;  
He shall meet the speeding year,  
Without wailing, without fear;  
He shall be happy in his love,  
Like to like shall joyful prove;  
He shall be happy whilst he wooes,  
Muse-born, a daughter of the Muse.  
But if with gold she bind her hair,  
And deck her breast with diamond,  
Take off thine eyes, thy heart forbear,  
Though thou lie alone on the ground.

‘ Heed the old oracles,  
Ponder my spells;  
Song wakes in my pinnacles  
When the wind swells.  
Soundeth the prophetic wind,  
The shadows shake on the rock behind,  
And the countless leaves of the pine are strings  
Tuned to the lay the wood-god sings.

Hearken! Hearken!

If thou wouldst know the mystic song  
Chanted when the sphere was young.  
Aloft, abroad, the pæan swells;  
O wise man! hear’st thou half it tells?  
O wise man! hear’st thou the least part? ‘  
’T is the chronicle of art.  
To the open ear it sings  
Sweet the genesis of things,  
Of tendency through endless ages,  
Of star-dust, and star-pilgrimages,  
Of rounded worlds, of space and time,  
Of the old flood’s subsiding slime,  
Of chemic matter, force and form,  
Of poles and powers, cold, wet, and warm:  
The rushing metamorphosis  
Dissolving all that fixture is,

Melts things that be to things that seem,  
And solid nature to a dream.  
O, listen to the undersong,  
The ever old, the ever young;  
And, far within those cadent pauses,  
The chorus of the ancient Causes!  
Delights the dreadful Destiny  
To fling his voice into the tree,  
And shock thy weak ear with a note  
Breathed from the everlasting throat.  
In music he repeats the pang  
Whence the fair flock of Nature sprang.  
O mortal! thy ears are stones;  
These echoes are laden with tones  
Which only the pure can hear;  
Thou canst not catch what they recite  
Of Fate and Will, of Want and Right,  
Of man to come, of human life,  
Of Death and Fortune, Growth and Strife.'

Once again the pine-tree sung:—  
'Speak not thy speech my boughs among;  
Put off thy years, wash in the breeze;  
My hours are peaceful centuries.  
Talk no more with feeble tongue;  
No more the fool of space and time,  
Come weave with mine a nobler rhyme.  
Only thy Americans  
Can read thy line, can meet thy glance,  
But the runes that I rehearse  
Understands the universe;  
The least breath my boughs which tossed  
Brings again the Pentecost;  
To every soul resounding clear  
In a voice of solemn cheer,—  
"Am I not thine? Are not these thine?"  
And they reply, "Forever mine!"  
My branches speak Italian,  
English, German, Basque, Castilian,

Mountain speech to Highlanders,  
Ocean tongues to islanders,  
To Fin and Lap and swart Malay,  
To each his bosom-secret say.

‘Come learn with me the fatal song  
Which knits the world in music strong,  
Come lift thine eyes to lofty rhymes,  
Of things with things, of times with times,  
Primal chimes of sun and shade,  
Of sound and echo, man and maid,  
The land reflected in the flood,  
Body with shadow still pursued.  
For Nature beats in perfect tune,  
And rounds with rhyme her every rune,  
Whether she work in land or sea,  
Or hide underground her alchemy.  
Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,  
Or dip thy paddle in the lake,  
But it carves the bow of beauty there,  
And the ripples in rhymes the oar forsake.  
The wood is wiser far than thou;  
The wood and wave each other know  
Not unrelated, unaffied,  
But to each thought and thing allied,  
Is perfect Nature’s every part,  
Rooted in the mighty Heart.  
But thou, poor child! unbound, unrhymed,  
Whence camest thou, misplaced, mistimed,  
Whence, O thou orphan and defrauded?  
Is thy land peeled, thy realm marauded?  
Who thee divorced, deceived and left?  
Thee of thy faith who hath bereft,  
And torn the ensigns from thy brow,  
And sunk the immortal eye so low?  
Thy cheek too white, thy form too slender,  
Thy gait too slow, thy habits tender  
For royal man;—they thee confess  
An exile from the wilderness,—

The hills where health with health agrees,  
And the wise soul expels disease.  
Hark! in thy ear I will tell the sign  
By which thy hurt thou may'st divine.  
When thou shalt climb the mountain cliff,  
Or see the wide shore from thy skiff,  
To thee the horizon shall express  
But emptiness on emptiness;  
There lives no man of Nature's worth  
In the circle of the earth;  
And to thine eye the vast skies fall,  
Dire and satirical,  
On clucking hens and prating fools,  
On thieves, on drudges and on dolls.  
And thou shalt say to the Most High,  
"Godhead! all this astronomy,  
And fate and practice and invention,  
Strong art and beautiful pretension,  
This radiant pomp of sun and star,  
Throes that were, and worlds that are,  
Behold! were in vain and in vain;—  
It cannot be,—I will look again.  
Surely now will the curtain rise,  
And earth's fit tenant me surprise;—  
But the curtain doth *not* rise,  
And Nature has miscarried wholly  
Into failure, into folly."

'Alas! thine is the bankruptcy,  
Blessed Nature so to see.  
Come, lay thee in my soothing shade,  
And heal the hurts which sin has made.  
I see thee in the crowd alone;  
I will be thy companion.  
Quit thy friends as the dead in doom,  
And build to them a final tomb;  
Let the starred shade that nightly falls  
Still celebrate their funerals,  
And the bell of beetle and of bee  
Knell their melodious memory.



Behind thee leave thy merchandise,  
Thy churches and thy charities;  
And leave thy peacock wit behind;  
Enough for thee the primal mind  
That flows in streams, that breathes in wind:  
Leave all thy pedant lore apart;  
God hid the whole world in thy heart.  
Love shuns the sage, the child it crowns,  
Gives all to them who all renounce.  
The rain comes when the wind calls;  
The river knows the way to the sea;  
Without a pilot it runs and falls,  
Blessing all lands with its charity;  
The sea tosses and foams to find  
Its way up to the cloud and wind;  
The shadow sits close to the flying ball;  
The date fails not on the palm-tree tall;  
And thou,—go burn thy wormy pages,—  
Shalt outsee seers, and outwit sages.  
Oft didst thou thread the woods in vain  
To find what bird had piped the strain:—  
Seek not, and the little eremite  
Flies gayly forth and sings in sight.

‘Hearken once more!  
I will tell thee the mundane lore.  
Older am I than thy numbers wot,  
Change I may, but I pass not.  
Hitherto all things fast abide,  
And anchored in the tempest ride.  
Trenchant time behoves to hurry  
All to yean and all to bury:  
All the forms are fugitive,  
But the substances survive.  
Ever fresh the broad creation,  
A divine improvisation,  
From the heart of God proceeds,  
A single will, a million deeds.  
Once slept the world an egg of stone,  
And pulse, and sound, and light was none;

And God said, "Throb!" and there was motion  
And the vast mass became vast ocean.  
Onward and on, the eternal Pan,  
Who layeth the world's incessant plan,  
Halteth never in one shape,  
But forever doth escape,  
Like wave or flame, into new forms  
Of gem, and air, of plants, and worms.  
I, that to-day am a pine,  
Yesterday was a bundle of grass.  
He is free and libertine,  
Pouring of his power the wine  
To every age, to every race;  
Unto every race and age  
He emptieth the beverage;  
Unto each, and unto all,  
Maker and original.  
The world is the ring of his spells,  
And the play of his miracles.  
As he giveth to all to drink,  
Thus or thus they are and think.  
With one drop sheds form and feature;  
With the next a special nature;  
The third adds heat's indulgent spark;  
The fourth gives light which eats the dark;  
Into the fifth himself he flings,  
And conscious Law is King of kings.  
As the bee through the garden ranges,  
From world to world the godhead changes;  
As the sheep go feeding in the waste,  
From form to form He maketh haste:  
This vault which glows immense with light  
Is the inn where he lodges for a night.  
What reck's such Traveller if the bowers  
Which bloom and fade like meadow flowers  
A bunch of fragrant lilies be,  
Or the stars of eternity?  
Alike to him the better, the worse,—  
The glowing angel, the outcast corse.  
Thou metest him by centuries,

And lo! he passes like the breeze;  
 Thou seek'st in globe and galaxy,  
 He hides in pure transparency;  
 Thou askest in fountains and in fires,  
 He is the essence that inquires.  
 He is the axis of the star;  
 He is the sparkle of the spar;  
 He is the heart of every creature;  
 He is the meaning of each feature;  
 And his mind is the sky,  
 Than all it holds more deep, more high.'

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## BOSTON HYMN

READ IN MUSIC HALL, JANUARY 1, 1863<sup>1</sup>

THE word of the Lord by night  
 To the watching Pilgrims came,  
 As they sat by the seaside,  
 And filled their hearts with flame.

God said, I am tired of kings,  
 I suffer them no more;  
 Up to my ear the morning brings  
 The outrage of the poor.

Think ye I made this ball  
 A field of havoc and war,  
 Where tyrants great and tyrants small  
 Might harry the weak and poor?

My angel,—his name is Freedom,—  
 Choose him to be your king;  
 He shall cut pathways east and west  
 And fend you with his wing.

Lo! I uncover the land  
 Which I hid of old time in the West,  
 As the sculptor uncovers the statue  
 When he has wrought his best;

The day when the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect.

I show Columbia, of the rocks  
Which dip their foot in the seas  
And soar to the air-borne flocks  
Of clouds and the boreal fleece.

I will divide my goods;  
Call in the wretch and slave:  
None shall rule but the humble,  
And none but Toil shall have.

I will have never a noble,  
No lineage counted great;  
Fishers and choppers and ploughmen  
Shall constitute a state.

Go, cut down trees in the forest  
And trim the straightest boughs;  
Cut down trees in the forest  
And build me a wooden house.

Call the people together,  
The young men and the sires,  
The digger in the harvest-field,  
Hireling and him that hires;

And here in a pine state-house  
They shall choose men to rule  
In every needful faculty,  
In church and state and school.

Lo, now! if these poor men  
Can govern the land and sea  
And make just laws below the sun,  
As planets faithful be.

And ye shall succor men;  
'Tis nobleness to serve;  
Help them who cannot help again:  
Beware from right to swerve.

I break your bonds and masterships,  
And I unchain the slave:  
Free be his heart and hand henceforth  
As wind and wandering wave.

I cause from every creature  
His proper good to flow:  
As much as he is and doeth,  
So much he shall bestow.

But, lay hands on another  
To coin his labor and sweat,  
He goes in pawn for his victim  
For eternal years in debt.

To-day unbind the captive,  
So only are ye unbound;  
Lift up a people from the dust,  
Trump of their rescue, sound!

Pay ransom to the owner  
And fill the bag to the brim.  
Who is the owner? The slave is owner,  
And ever was. Pay him.

O North! give him beauty for rags,  
And honor, O South! for his shame;  
Nevada! coin thy golden crags  
With Freedom's image and name.

Up! and the dusky race  
That sat in darkness long,—  
Be swift their feet as antelopes,  
And as behemoth strong.

Come, East and West and North,  
By races, as snow flakes,  
And carry my purpose forth,  
Which neither halts nor shakes.

My will fulfilled shall be,  
For, in daylight or in dark,  
My thunderbolt has eyes to see  
His way home to the mark.

## HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

[1807-1882]

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## A PSALM OF LIFE

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN  
SAID TO THE PSALMIST

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,  
Life is but an empty dream!  
For the soul is dead that slumbers,  
And things are not what they seem.

| Life is real! Life is earnest!  
| And the grave is not its goal;  
| Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
| Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,  
Is our destined end or way;  
But to act, that each to-morrow  
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,  
And our hearts, though stout and brave,  
Still, like muffled drums, are beating  
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,  
In the bivouac of Life,  
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!  
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!  
Let the dead Past bury its dead!  
Act,—act in the living Present!  
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,  
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate;  
Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labor and to wait.

774

## THE LIGHT OF STARS

THE night is come, but not too soon;  
And sinking silently,  
All silently, the little moon  
Drops down behind the sky.

There is no light in earth or heaven  
But the cold light of stars;  
And the first watch of night is given  
To the red planet Mars.

Is it the tender star of love?  
The star of love and dreams?  
Oh no! from that blue tent above  
A hero's armor gleams.

And earnest thoughts within me rise,  
When I behold afar,  
Suspended in the evening skies,  
The shield of that red star.

O star of strength! I see thee stand  
And smile upon my pain;  
Thou beckonest with thy mailed hand,  
And I am strong again.

Within my breast there is no light  
But the cold light of stars;  
I give the first watch of the night  
To the red planet Mars.

The star of the unconquered will,  
He rises in my breast,  
Serene, and resolute, and still,  
And calm, and self-possessed.

And thou, too, whosoe'er thou art,  
That readest this brief psalm,  
As one by one thy hopes depart,  
Be resolute and calm.

Oh, fear not in a world like this,  
And thou shalt know erelong,  
Know how sublime a thing it is  
To suffer and be strong.

## HYMN TO THE NIGHT

*Ἀσπασία, τριλλιστος*

I HEARD the trailing garments of the Night  
Sweep through her marble halls!  
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light  
From the celestial walls!



I felt her presence, by its spell of might,  
    Stoop o'er me from above;  
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,  
    As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,  
    The manifold, soft chimes,  
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,  
    Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air  
    My spirit drank repose;  
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—  
    From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear  
    What man has borne before!  
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,  
    And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!  
    Descend with broad-winged flight,  
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,  
    The best-beloved Night!

## FOOTSTEPS OF ANGELS

WHEN the hours of Day are numbered,  
    And the voices of the Night  
Wake the better soul, that slumbered,  
    To a holy, calm delight;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,  
    And, like phantoms grim and tall,  
Shadows from the fitful firelight  
    Dance upon the parlor wall;

Then the forms of the departed  
Enter at the open door;  
The beloved, the true-hearted,  
Come to visit me once more;

He, the young and strong, who cherished  
Noble longings for the strife,  
By the roadside fell and perished,  
Weary with the march of life!

They, the holy ones and weakly,  
Who the cross of suffering bore,  
Folded their pale hands so meekly,  
Spake with us on earth no more!

And with them the Being Beauteous,  
Who unto my youth was given,  
More than all things else to love me,  
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep  
Comes that messenger divine,  
Takes the vacant chair beside me,  
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me  
With those deep and tender eyes,  
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,  
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,  
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,  
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,  
Breathing from her lips of air.

Oh, though oft depressed and lonely,  
All my fears are laid aside,  
If I but remember only  
Such as these have lived and died!

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## THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS

It was the schooner Hesperus,  
That sailed the wintry sea;  
And the skipper had taken his little daughtèr,  
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,  
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,  
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,  
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,  
His pipe was in his mouth,  
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow  
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailòr,  
Had sailed to the Spanish Main,  
'I pray thee, put into yonder port,  
For I fear a hurricane.

'Last night, the moon had a golden ring,  
And to-night no moon we see!'  
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,  
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,  
A gale from the Northeast,  
The snow fell hissing in the brine,  
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain  
The vessel in its strength;  
She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,  
Then leaped her cable's length.

'Come hither! come hither! my little daughtèr,  
And do not tremble so;  
For I can weather the roughest gale  
That ever wind did blow.'

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat  
Against the stinging blast;  
He cut a rope from a broken spar,  
And bound her to the mast.

'O father! I hear the church-bells ring,  
Oh say, what may it be?'  
'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!—  
And he steered for the open sea.

'O father! I hear the sound of guns,  
Oh say, what may it be?'  
'Some ship in distress, that cannot live  
In such an angry sea!'

'O father! I see a gleaming light,  
Oh say, what may it be?'  
But the father answered never a word,  
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,  
With his face turned to the skies,  
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow  
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed  
That savèd she might be;  
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,  
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,  
Through the whistling sleet and snow,  
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept  
Tow'rds the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between  
A sound came from the land;  
It was the sound of the trampling surf  
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,  
She drifted a dreary wreck,  
And a whooping billow swept the crew  
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves  
Looked soft as carded wool,  
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side  
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,  
With the masts went by the board;  
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,  
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,  
A fisherman stood aghast,  
To see the form of a maiden fair,  
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,  
The salt tears in her eyes;  
And he saw her hair, like the brown seaweed,  
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,  
In the midnight and the snow!  
Christ save us all from a death like this,  
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

## THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

UNDER a spreading chestnut-tree  
The village smithy stands;  
The smith, a mighty man is he,  
With large and sinewy hands;  
And the muscles of his brawny arms  
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,  
His face is like the tan;  
His brow is wet with honest sweat,  
He earns whate'er he can,  
And looks the whole world in the face,  
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,  
You can hear his bellows blow;  
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,  
With measured beat and slow,  
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,  
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school  
Look in at the open door;  
They love to see the flaming forge,  
And hear the bellows roar,  
And catch the burning sparks that fly  
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,  
And sits among his boys;  
He hears the parson pray and preach,  
He hears his daughter's voice,  
Singing in the village choir,  
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,  
Singing in Paradise!  
He needs must think of her once more  
How in the grave she lies;  
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes  
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,  
Onward through life he goes;  
Each morning sees some task begin,  
Each evening sees it close;  
Something attempted, something done,  
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,  
For the lesson thou hast taught!  
Thus at the flaming forge of life  
Our fortunes must be wrought;  
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped  
Each burning deed and thought.

779

## SERENADE

FROM 'THE SPANISH STUDENT'

STARS of the summer night!  
Far in yon azure deeps,  
Hide, hide your golden light!  
She sleeps!  
My lady sleeps!  
Sleeps!

Moon of the summer night!  
Far down yon western steeps,  
Sink, sink in silver light!  
She sleeps!  
My lady sleeps!  
Sleeps!

Wind of the summer night!  
Where yonder woodbine creeps,  
Fold, fold thy pinions light!  
She sleeps!  
My lady sleeps!  
Sleeps!

Dreams of the summer night!  
Tell her, her lover keeps  
Watch! while in slumbers light  
She sleeps!  
My lady sleeps!  
Sleeps!

780

## THE RAINY DAY

THE day is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,  
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,  
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering Past,  
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,  
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;  
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;  
Thy fate is the common fate of all,  
Into each life some rain must fall,  
Some days must be dark and dreary.

781

## THE DAY IS DONE

THE day is done, and the darkness  
Falls from the wings of Night,  
As a feather is wafted downward  
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village  
Gleam through the rain and the mist,  
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me  
That my soul cannot resist:

A feeling of sadness and longing,  
That is not akin to pain,  
And resembles sorrow only  
As the mist resembles the rain.



Come, read to me some poem,  
Some simple and heartfelt lay,  
That shall soothe this restless feeling,  
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,  
Not from the bards sublime,  
Whose distant footsteps echo  
Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,  
Their mighty thoughts suggest  
Life's endless toil and endeavor;  
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,  
Whose songs gushed from his heart,  
As showers from the clouds of summer,  
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who, through long days of labor,  
And nights devoid of ease,  
Still heard in his soul the music  
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet  
The restless pulse of care,  
And come like the benediction  
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume  
The poem of thy choice,  
And lend to the rhyme of the poet  
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,  
And the cares, that infest the day,  
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,  
And as silently steal away.

782

## THE BRIDGE

I stood on the bridge at midnight,  
As the clocks were striking the hour,  
And the moon rose o'er the city,  
Behind the dark church-tower.

I saw her bright reflection  
In the waters under me,  
Like a golden goblet falling  
And sinking into the sea.

And far in the hazy distance  
Of that lovely night in June,  
The blaze of the flaming furnace  
Gleamed redder than the moon.

Among the long, black rafters  
The wavering shadows lay,  
And the current that came from the ocean  
Seemed to lift and bear them away;

As, sweeping and eddying through them,  
Rose the belated tide,  
And, streaming into the moonlight,  
The seaweed floated wide.

And like those waters rushing  
Among the wooden piers,  
A flood of thoughts came o'er me  
That filled my eyes with tears.

How often, oh how often,  
In the days that had gone by,  
I had stood on that bridge at midnight  
And gazed on that wave and sky!

How often, oh how often,  
I had wished that the ebbing tide  
Would bear me away on its bosom  
O'er the ocean wild and wide!

For my heart was hot and restless,  
And my life was full of care,  
And the burden laid upon me  
Seemed greater than I could bear.

But now it has fallen from me,  
It is buried in the sea;  
And only the sorrow of others  
Throws its shadow over me.

Yet whenever I cross the river  
On its bridge with wooden piers,  
Like the odor of brine from the ocean  
Comes the thought of other years.

And I think how many thousands  
Of care-encumbered men,  
Each bearing his burden of sorrow,  
Have crossed the bridge since then.

I see the long procession  
Still passing to and fro,  
The young heart hot and restless,  
And the old subdued and slow!

And forever and forever,  
As long as the river flows,  
As long as the heart has passions,  
As long as life has woes;

The moon and its broken reflection  
And its shadows shall appear,  
As the symbol of love in heaven,  
And its wavering image here.

THERE is no flock, however watched and tended,  
But one dead lamb is there!  
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,  
But has one vacant chair!

The air is full of farewells to the dying,  
And mournings for the dead;  
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,  
Will not be comforted!

Let us be patient! These severe afflictions  
Not from the ground arise,  
But oftentimes celestial benedictions  
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors;  
Amid these earthly damps  
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers  
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death! What seems so is transition;  
This life of mortal breath  
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,  
Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead,—the child of our affection,—  
But gone unto that school  
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,  
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,  
By guardian angels led,  
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,  
She lives whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing  
In those bright realms of air;  
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,  
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken,  
The bond which nature gives,  
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,  
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;  
For when with raptures wild  
In our embraces we again enfold her,  
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,  
Clothed with celestial grace;  
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion  
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion  
And anguish long suppressed,  
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,  
That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling  
We may not wholly stay;  
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,  
The grief that must have way.

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## CHILDREN

COME to me, O ye children!  
For I hear you at your play,  
And the questions that perplexed me  
Have vanished quite away.

Ye open the eastern windows,  
That look towards the sun,  
Where thoughts are singing swallows  
And the brooks of morning run.

In your hearts are the birds and the sunshine,  
In your thoughts the brooklet's flow,  
But in mine is the wind of Autumn  
And the first fall of the snow.

Ah! what would the world be to us  
If the children were no more?  
We should dread the desert behind us  
Worse than the dark before.

What the leaves are to the forest,  
With light and air for food,  
Ere their sweet and tender juices  
Have been hardened into wood,—

That to the world are children;  
Through them it feels the glow  
Of a brighter and sunnier climate  
Than reaches the trunks below.

Come to me, O ye children!  
And whisper in my ear  
What the birds and the winds are singing  
In your sunny atmosphere.

For what are all our contrivings,  
And the wisdom of our books,  
When compared with your caresses,  
And the gladness of your looks?

Ye are better than all the ballads  
That ever were sung or said;  
For ye are living poems,  
And all the rest are dead.

## THE BUILDING OF THE SHIP

'BUILD me straight, O worthy Master!  
Stanch and strong, a goodly vessel,  
That shall laugh at all disaster,  
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!'

The merchant's word  
Delighted the Master heard;  
For his heart was in his work, and the heart  
Giveth grace unto every Art.  
A quiet smile played round his lips,  
As the eddies and dimples of the tide

Play round the bows of ships  
That steadily at anchor ride.  
And with a voice that was full of glee,  
He answered, ' Erelong we will launch  
A vessel as goodly, and strong, and stanch,  
As ever weathered a wintry sea !'  
And first with nicest skill and art,  
Perfect and finished in every part,  
A little model the Master wrought,  
Which should be to the larger plan  
What the child is to the man,  
Its counterpart in miniature;  
That with a hand more swift and sure  
The greater labor might be brought  
To answer to his inward thought.  
And as he labored, his mind ran o'er  
The various ships that were built of yore,  
And above them all, and strangest of all  
Towered the Great Harry, crank and tall,  
Whose picture was hanging on the wall,  
With bows and stern raised high in air,  
And balconies hanging here and there,  
And signal lanterns and flags afloat,  
And eight round towers, like those that frown  
From some old castle, looking down  
Upon the drawbridge and the moat.  
And he said with a smile, ' Our ship, I wis,  
Shall be of another form than this !'  
It was of another form, indeed ;  
Built for freight, and yet for speed,  
A beautiful and gallant craft ;  
Broad in the beam, that the stress of the blast,  
Pressing down upon sail and mast,  
Might not the sharp bows overwhelm ;  
Broad in the beam, but sloping aft  
With graceful curve and slow degrees,  
That she might be docile to the helm,  
And that the currents of parted seas,  
Closing behind, with mighty force,  
Might aid and not impede her course.

In the ship-yard stood the Master,  
With the model of the vessel,  
That should laugh at all disaster,  
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!

Covering many a rood of ground,  
Lay the timber piled around;  
Timber of chestnut, and elm, and oak,  
And scattered here and there, with these,  
The knarred and crooked cedar knees;  
Brought from regions far away,  
From Pascagoula's sunny bay,  
And the banks of the roaring Roanoke!  
Ah! what a wondrous thing it is  
To note how many wheels of toil  
One thought, one word, can set in motion!  
There 's not a ship that sails the ocean,  
But every climate, every soil,  
Must bring its tribute, great or small,  
And help to build the wooden wall!

The sun was rising o'er the sea,  
And long the level shadows lay,  
As if they, too, the beams would be  
Of some great, airy argosy, *large merchant ship*  
Framed and launched in a single day.  
That silent architect, the sun,  
Had hewn and laid them every one,  
Ere the work of man was yet begun.  
Beside the Master, when he spoke,  
A youth, against an anchor leaning,  
Listened, to catch his slightest meaning,  
Only the long waves, as they broke  
In ripples on the pebbly beach,  
Interrupted the old man's speech.

Beautiful they were, in sooth,  
The old man and the fiery youth!  
The old man, in whose busy brain  
Many a ship that sailed the main



Was modelled o'er and o'er again;  
The fiery youth, who was to be  
The heir of his dexterity,  
The heir of his house, and his daughter's hand,  
When he had built and launched from land  
What the elder head had planned.

'Thus,' said he, 'will we build this ship!  
Lay square the blocks upon the slip,  
And follow well this plan of mine.  
Choose the timbers with greatest care;  
Of all that is unsound beware;  
For only what is sound and strong  
To this vessel shall belong.  
Cedar of Maine and Georgia pine  
Here together shall combine.  
A goodly frame, and a goodly fame,  
And the UNION be her name!  
For the day that gives her to the sea  
Shall give my daughter unto thee!'

The Master's word  
Enraptured the young man heard;  
And as he turned his face aside,  
With a look of joy and a thrill of pride  
Standing before  
Her father's door,  
He saw the form of his promised bride.  
The sun shone on her golden hair,  
And her cheek was glowing fresh and fair,  
With the breath of morn and the soft sea air.  
Like a beauteous barge was she,  
Still at rest on the sandy beach,  
Just beyond the billow's reach;  
But he  
Was the restless, seething, stormy sea!  
Ah, how skilful grows the hand  
That obeyeth Love's command!  
It is the heart, and not the brain,  
That to the highest doth attain,

And he who followeth Love's behest  
Far excelleth all the rest!

Thus with the rising of the sun  
Was the noble task begun,  
And soon throughout the ship-yard's bounds  
Were heard the intermingled sounds  
Of axes and of mallets, plied  
With vigorous arms on every side;  
Plied so deftly and so well,  
That, ere the shadows of evening fell,  
The keel of oak for a noble ship,  
Scarfed and bolted, straight and strong,  
Was lying ready, and stretched along  
The blocks, well placed upon the slip.  
Happy, thrice happy, every one  
Who sees his labor well begun,  
And not perplexed and multiplied,  
By idly waiting for time and tide!

And when the hot, long day was o'er,  
The young man at the Master's door  
Sat with the maiden calm and still,  
And within the porch, a little more  
Removed beyond the evening chill,  
The father sat, and told them tales  
Of wrecks in the great September gales,  
Of pirates coasting the Spanish Main,  
And ships that never came back again,  
The chance and change of a sailor's life,  
Want and plenty, rest and strife,  
His roving fancy, like the wind,  
That nothing can stay and nothing can bind,  
And the magic charm of foreign lands,  
With shadows of palms, and shining sands,  
Where the tumbling surf,  
O'er the coral reefs of Madagascar,  
Washes the feet of the swarthy Lascar,  
As he lies alone and asleep on the turf.

And the trembling maiden held her breath  
At the tales of that awful, pitiless sea,  
With all its terror and mystery,  
The dim, dark sea, so like unto Death,  
That divides and yet unites mankind!  
And whenever the old man paused, a gleam  
From the bowl of his pipe would awhile illumine  
The silent group in the twilight gloom,  
And thoughtful faces, as in a dream;  
And for a moment one might mark  
What had been hidden by the dark,  
That the head of the maiden lay at rest,  
Tenderly, on the young man's breast!

Day by day the vessel grew,  
With timbers fashioned strong and true,  
Stemson and keelson and sternson-knee,  
Till, framed with perfect symmetry,  
A skeleton ship rose up to view!  
And around the bows and along the side  
The heavy hammers and mallets plied,  
Till after many a week, at length,  
Wonderful for form and strength,  
Sublime in its enormous bulk,  
Loomed aloft the shadowy hulk!  
And around it columns of smoke, upwreathing,  
Rose from the boiling, bubbling, seething  
Caldron, that glowed,  
And overflowed  
With the black tar, heated for the sheathing.  
And amid the clamors  
Of clattering hammers,  
He who listened heard now and then  
The song of the Master and his men:—

‘Build me straight, O worthy Master,  
Stanch and strong, a goodly vessel,  
That shall laugh at all disaster,  
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!’

With oaken brace and copper band,  
Lay the rudder on the sand,  
That, like a thought, should have control  
Over the movement of the whole;  
And near it the anchor, whose giant hand  
Would reach down and grapple with the land,  
And immovable and fast  
Hold the great ship against the bellowing blast!  
And at the bows an image stood,  
By a cunning artist carved in wood,  
With robes of white, that far behind  
Seemed to be fluttering in the wind.  
It was not shaped in a classic mould,  
Not like a Nymph or Goddess of old,  
Or Naiad rising from the water,  
But modelled from the Master's daughter!  
On many a dreary and misty night,  
'T will be seen by the rays of the signal light,  
Speeding along through the rain and the dark,  
Like a ghost in its snow-white sark,  
The pilot of some phantom bark,  
Guiding the vessel, in its flight,  
By a path none other knows aright!

Behold, at last,  
Each tall and tapering mast  
Is swung into its place;  
Shrouds and stays  
Holding it firm and fast!

Long ago,  
In the deer-haunted forests of Maine,  
When upon mountain and plain  
Lay the snow,  
They fell,—those lordly pines!  
Those grand, majestic pines!  
'Mid shouts and cheers  
The jaded steers,  
Panting beneath the goad, *printed in the*  
Dragged down the weary, winding road

Those captive kings so straight and tall,  
To be shorn of their streaming hair,  
And naked and bare,  
To feel the stress and the strain  
Of the wind and the reeling main,  
Whose roar  
Would remind them forevermore  
Of their native forests they should not see again.  
And everywhere  
The slender, graceful spars *round timbers*  
Poise aloft in the air,  
And at the mast-head,  
White, blue, and red,  
A flag unrolls the stripes and stars.  
Ah! when the wanderer, lonely, friendless,  
In foreign harbors shall behold  
That flag unrolled,  
'T will be as a friendly hand  
Stretched out from his native land,  
Filling his heart with memories sweet and endless!

All is finished! and at length  
Has come the bridal day  
Of beauty and of strength.  
To-day the vessel shall be launched!  
With fleecy clouds the sky is blanchèd,  
And o'er the bay,  
Slowly, in all his splendors dight, *To a-dorn*  
The great sun rises to behold the sight.  
The ocean old,  
Centuries old,  
Strong as youth, and as uncontrolled,  
Paces restless to and fro,  
Up and down the sands of gold.  
His beating heart is not at rest;  
And far and wide,  
With ceaseless flow,  
His beard of snow  
Heaves with the heaving of his breast.  
He waits impatient for his bride.

There she stands,  
With her foot upon the sands,  
Decked with flags and streamers gay,  
In honor of her marriage day,  
Her snow-white signals fluttering, blending,  
Round her like a veil descending,  
Ready to be  
The bride of the gray old sea.

On the deck another bride  
Is standing by her lover's side.  
Shadows from the flags and shrouds,  
Like the shadows cast by clouds,  
Broken by many a sudden fleck,  
Fall around them on the deck.

The prayer is said,  
The service read,  
The joyous bridegroom bows his head;  
And in tears the good old Master  
Shakes the brown hand of his son,  
Kisses his daughter's glowing cheek  
In silence, for he cannot speak,  
And ever faster  
Down his own the tears begin to run.  
The worthy pastor—  
The shepherd of that wandering flock,  
That has the ocean for its wold,  
That has the vessel for its fold,  
Leaping ever from rock to rock—  
Spake, with accents mild and clear,  
Words of warning, words of cheer,  
But tedious to the bridegroom's ear.  
He knew the chart  
Of the sailor's heart,  
All its pleasures and its griefs,  
All its shallows and rocky reefs,  
All those secret currents, that flow  
With such resistless undertow,  
And lift and drift, with terrible force,

The will from its moorings and its course.  
Therefore he spake, and thus said he:—  
‘Like unto ships far off at sea,  
Outward or homeward bound, are we.  
Before, behind, and all around,  
Floats and swings the horizon’s bound,  
Seems at its distant rim to rise  
And climb the crystal wall of the skies,  
And then again to turn and sink,  
As if we could slide from its outer brink.  
Ah! it is not the sea,  
It is not the sea that sinks and shelves,  
But ourselves  
That rock and rise  
With endless and uneasy motion,  
Now touching the very skies,  
Now sinking into the depths of ocean.  
Ah! if our souls but poise and swing  
Like the compass in its brazen ring,  
Ever level and ever true  
To the toil and the task we have to do,  
We shall sail securely, and safely reach  
The Fortunate Isles, on whose shining beach  
The sights we see, and the sounds we hear,  
Will be those of joy and not of fear!’

Then the Master,  
With a gesture of command,  
Waved his hand;  
And at the word,  
Loud and sudden there was heard,  
All around them and below,  
The sound of hammers, blow on blow,  
Knocking away the shores and spurs.  
And see! she stirs!  
She starts,—she moves,—she seems to feel  
The thrill of life along her keel,  
And, spurning with her foot the ground,  
With one exulting, joyous bound,  
She leaps into the ocean’s arms!

And lo! from the assembled crowd  
There rose a shout, prolonged and loud,  
That to the ocean seemed to say,  
'Take her, O bridegroom, old and gray,  
Take her to thy protecting arms,  
With all her youth and all her charms!

How beautiful she is! How fair  
She lies within those arms, that press  
Her form with many a soft caress  
Of tenderness and watchful care!  
Sail forth into the sea, O ship!  
Through wind and wave, right onward steer!  
The moistened eye, the trembling lip,  
Are not the signs of doubt or fear.

Sail forth into the sea of life,  
O gentle, loving, trusting wife,  
And safe from all adversity  
Upon the bosom of that sea  
Thy comings and thy goings be!  
For gentleness and love and trust  
Prevail o'er angry wave and gust;  
And in the wreck of noble lives  
Something immortal still survives!

Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!  
Sail on, O UNION, strong and great!  
Humanity with all its fears,  
With all the hopes of future years,  
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!  
We know what Master laid thy keel,  
What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,  
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,  
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,  
In what a forge and what a heat  
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!  
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,  
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;



'Tis but the flapping of the sail,  
And not a rent made by the gale!  
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,  
In spite of false lights on the shore,  
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!  
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,  
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,  
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,  
Are all with thee,—are all with thee!

786

## MY LOST YOUTH

OFTEN I think of the beautiful town  
That is seated by the sea;  
Often in thought go up and down  
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,  
And my youth comes back to me.  
And a verse of a Lapland song  
Is haunting my memory still:  
'A boy's will is the wind's will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.'

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,  
And catch, in sudden gleams,  
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,  
And islands that were the Hesperides  
Of all my boyish dreams.  
And the burden of that old song,  
It murmurs and whispers still:  
'A boy's will is the wind's will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.'

I remember the black wharves and the slips,  
And the sea-tides tossing free;  
And the Spanish sailors with bearded lips,  
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,  
And the magic of the sea.  
And the voice of that wayward song

Is singing and saying still:  
‘A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.’

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,  
And the fort upon the hill;  
The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar,  
The drum-beat repeated o’er and o’er,  
And the bugle wild and shrill.  
And the music of that old song  
Throbs in my memory still:  
‘A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.’

I remember the sea-fight far away,  
How it thundered o’er the tide!  
And the dead captains, as they lay  
In their graves, o’erlooking the tranquil bay  
Where they in battle died.  
And the sound of that mournful song  
Goes through me with a thrill:  
‘A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.’

I can see the breezy dome of groves,  
The shadows of Deering’s Woods;  
And the friendships old and the early loves  
Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves  
In quiet neighborhoods.  
And the verse of that sweet old song,  
It flutters and murmurs still:  
‘A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.’

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart  
Across the school-boy’s brain;  
The song and the silence in the heart,  
That in part are prophecies, and in part

Are longings wild and vain.  
And the voice of that fitful song  
Sings on, and is never still:  
‘A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.’

There are things of which I may not speak;  
There are dreams that cannot die;  
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,  
And bring a pallor into the cheek,  
And a mist before the eye.  
And the words of that fatal song  
Come over me like a chill:  
‘A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.’

Strange to me now are the forms I meet  
When I visit the dear old town;  
But the native air is pure and sweet,  
And the trees that o’ershadow each well-known  
street,  
As they balance up and down,  
Are singing the beautiful song,  
Are sighing and whispering still:  
‘A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.’

And Deering’s Woods are fresh and fair,  
And with joy that is almost pain  
My heart goes back to wander there,  
And among the dreams of the days that were,  
I find my lost youth again.  
And the strange and beautiful song,  
The groves are repeating it still:  
‘A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.’

787

## THE FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY OF AGASSIZ

*May 28, 1857*

It was fifty years ago  
In the pleasant month of May,  
In the beautiful Pays de Vaud,  
A child in its cradle lay.

And Nature, the old nurse, took  
The child upon her knee,  
Saying: 'Here is a story-book  
Thy Father has written for thee.'

'Come, wander with me,' she said  
'Into regions yet untrod;  
And read what is still unread  
In the manuscripts of God.'

And he wandered away and away  
With Nature, the dear old nurse,  
Who sang to him night and day  
The rhymes of the universe.

And whenever the way seemed long,  
Or his heart began to fail,  
She would sing a more wonderful song,  
Or tell a more marvellous tale.

So she keeps him still a child,  
And will not let him go,  
Though at times his heart beats wild  
For the beautiful Pays de Vaud;

Though at times he hears in his dreams  
The Ranz des Vaches of old,  
And the rush of mountain streams  
From glaciers clear and cold;

And the mother at home says, 'Hark!  
For his voice I listen and yearn;  
It is growing late and dark,  
And my boy does not return!'

788

## THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

BETWEEN the dark and the daylight,  
When the night is beginning to lower,  
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,  
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me  
The patter of little feet,  
The sound of a door that is opened,  
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,  
Descending the broad hall stair,  
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,  
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:  
Yet I know by their merry eyes  
They are plotting and planning together  
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,  
A sudden raid from the hall!  
By three doors left unguarded  
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret  
O'er the arms and back of my chair;  
If I try to escape, they surround me;  
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,  
Their arms about me entwine,  
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen  
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,  
Because you have scaled the wall,  
Such an old mustache as I am  
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,  
And will not let you depart,  
But put you down into the dungeon  
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,  
Yes, forever and a day,  
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,  
And moulder in dust away!

LISTEN, my children, and you shall hear  
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,  
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;  
Hardly a man is now alive  
Who remembers that famous day and year.  
He said to his friend, 'If the British march  
By land or sea from the town to-night,  
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch  
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—  
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;  
And I on the opposite shore will be,  
Ready to ride and spread the alarm  
Through every Middlesex village and farm,  
For the country folk to be up and to arm.'

Then he said, 'Good-night!' and with muffled oar  
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,  
Just as the moon rose over the bay,  
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay  
The Somerset, British man-of-war;  
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar  
Across the moon like a prison bar,

And a huge black hulk, that was magnified  
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,  
Wanders and watches with eager ears,  
Till in the silence around him he hears  
The muster of men at the barrack door,  
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,  
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,  
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North  
Church,  
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,  
To the belfry-chamber overhead,  
And startled the pigeons from their perch  
On the sombre rafters, that round him made  
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—  
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,  
To the highest window in the wall,  
Where he paused to listen and look down  
A moment on the roofs of the town,  
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,  
In their night-encampment on the hill,  
Wrapped in silence so deep and still  
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,  
The watchful night-wind, as it went  
Creeping along from tent to tent,  
And seeming to whisper, 'All is well!'  
A moment only he feels the spell  
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread  
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;  
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent  
On a shadowy something far away,  
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—  
A line of black that bends and floats  
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,  
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride  
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.  
Now he patted his horse's side,  
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,  
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,  
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;  
But mostly he watched with eager search  
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,  
As it rose above the graves on the hill,  
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.  
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height  
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!  
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,  
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight  
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,  
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,  
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark  
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;  
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the  
light,  
The fate of a nation was riding that night;  
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,  
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,  
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,  
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;  
And under the alders that skirt its edge,  
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,  
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock,  
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.  
He heard the crowing of the cock,  
And the barking of the farmer's dog,  
And felt the damp of the river fog,  
That rises after the sun goes down.



It was one by the village clock,  
When he galloped into Lexington.  
He saw the gilded weathercock  
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,  
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,  
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,  
As if they already stood aghast  
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,  
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.  
He heard the bleating of the flock,  
And the twitter of birds among the trees,  
And felt the breath of the morning breeze  
Blowing over the meadows brown.  
And one was safe and asleep in his bed  
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,  
Who that day would be lying dead,  
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,  
How the British Regulars fired and fled,—  
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,  
From behind each fence and farm-yard wall,  
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,  
Then crossing the fields to emerge again  
Under the trees at the turn of the road,  
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;  
And so through the night went his cry of alarm  
To every Middlesex village and farm,—  
A cry of defiance and not of fear,  
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,  
And a word that shall echo forevermore!  
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,  
Through all our history, to the last,  
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,  
The people will waken and listen to hear  
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,  
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

790

## KILLED AT THE FORD

HE is dead, the beautiful youth,  
The heart of honor, the tongue of truth,  
He, the life and light of us all,  
Whose voice was blithe as a bugle-call,  
Whom all eyes followed with one consent,  
The cheer of whose laugh, and whose pleasant word,  
Hushed all murmurs of discontent.

Only last night, as we rode along,  
Down the dark of the mountain gap,  
To visit the picket-guard at the ford,  
Little dreaming of any mishap,  
He was humming the words of some old song:  
'Two red roses he had on his cap  
And another he bore at the point of his sword.'

Sudden and swift a whistling ball  
Came out of a wood, and the voice was still;  
Something I heard in the darkness fall,  
And for a moment my blood grew chill;  
I spake in a whisper, as he who speaks  
In a room where some one is lying dead;  
But he made no answer to what I said.

We lifted him up to his saddle again,  
And through the mire and the mist and the rain  
Carried him back to the silent camp,  
And laid him as if asleep on his bed;  
And I saw by the light of the surgeon's lamp  
Two white roses upon his cheeks,  
And one, just over his heart, blood-red!

And I saw in a vision how far and fleet  
That fatal bullet went speeding forth,  
Till it reached a town in the distant North,  
Till it reached a house in a sunny street,  
Till it reached a heart that ceased to beat

Without a murmur, without a cry;  
And a bell was tolled, in that far-off town,  
For one who had passed from cross to crown  
And the neighbors wondered that she should die.

791

## EVANGELINE

## A TALE OF ACADIE

THIS is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the  
hemlocks,  
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in  
the twilight,  
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,  
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their  
bosoms.  
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring  
ocean  
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of  
the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that  
beneath it  
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the  
voice of the huntsman?  
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian  
farmers,—  
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the wood-  
lands,  
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of  
heaven?  
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever  
departed!  
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of  
October  
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far  
o'er the ocean.  
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of  
Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures,  
and is patient,  
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's  
devotion,  
List to the mournful tradition, still sung by the pines of  
the forest;  
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

## PART THE FIRST

## I

IN the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas,  
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand Pré  
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the  
eastward,  
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without  
number.  
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor  
incessant,  
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the  
flood-gates  
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the  
meadows.  
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards  
and cornfields  
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away to  
the northward  
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the  
mountains  
Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty  
Atlantic  
Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station  
descended.  
There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.  
Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and  
of hemlock,  
Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of  
the Henries.

Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows; and gables  
projecting  
Over the basement below protected and shaded the door-  
way  
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly  
the sunset  
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the  
chimneys,  
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles  
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the  
golden  
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within  
doors  
Mingled their sounds with the whirl of the wheels and the  
songs of the maidens.  
Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the  
children  
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless  
them.  
Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons  
and maidens,  
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate wel-  
come.  
Then came the laborers home from the field, and serenely  
the sun sank  
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the  
belfry  
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the  
village  
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense as-  
cending,  
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and  
contentment.  
Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers,—  
Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free  
from  
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of  
republics.  
Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their  
windows;

But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the  
owners;  
There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin  
of Minas,  
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-  
Pré,  
Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing his  
household,  
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the  
village.  
Stalwart and stately in form was the man of seventy  
winters;  
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-  
flakes;  
White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown  
as the oak-leaves.  
Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers.  
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn  
by the wayside,  
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade  
of her tresses!  
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the  
meadows.  
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noon-  
tide  
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the  
maiden.  
Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from  
its turret  
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his  
hyssop  
Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon  
them,  
Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads  
and her missal,  
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the  
ear-rings,

Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an  
heirloom,  
Handed down from mother to child, through long genera-  
tions.  
But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—  
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after con-  
fession,  
Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon  
her.  
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite  
music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the  
farmer  
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea; and a  
shady  
Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreathing  
around it.  
Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath; and a  
footpath  
Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the mea-  
dow.  
Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a pent-  
house,  
Such as the traveller sees in regions remote by the road-  
side,  
Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of  
Mary.  
Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with its  
moss-grown  
Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the  
horses.  
Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the  
barns and the farmyard.  
There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique ploughs  
and the harrows;  
There were the folds for the sheep; and there, in his  
feathered seraglio,  
Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the  
selfsame



Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.  
Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village  
In each one  
Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch; and a stair-  
case,  
Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-  
loft.  
There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent  
inmates  
Murmuring ever of love; while above in the variant breezes  
Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of muta-  
tion.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of  
Grand-Pré  
' Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his  
household.  
Many a youth, as he knelt in church and opened his missal,  
Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his deepest devotion;  
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her  
garment!  
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness befriended,  
And, as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of her  
footsteps,  
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker  
of iron;  
Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,  
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he  
whispered  
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.  
But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was wel-  
come;  
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,  
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored of all  
men;  
For, since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,  
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.  
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest  
childhood  
Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father Felician,



Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them  
their letters

Out of the self-same book, with the hymns of the church and  
the plain-song.

But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,  
Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the black-  
smith.

There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold  
him

Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,  
Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire of the  
cart-wheel

Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.

Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering dark-  
ness

Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny  
and crevice,

Warm by the forge within they watched the laboring bellows,  
And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the  
ashes,

Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the  
chapel.

Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the  
eagle,

Down the hillside bounding, they glided away o'er the mea-  
dow.

Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the  
rafters,

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the  
swallow

Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its  
fledglings;

Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the  
swallow!

Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were  
children.

He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the  
morning,

Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into  
action.

She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.  
'Sunshine of Saint Eulalie' was she called; for that was  
the sunshine  
Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards  
with apples;  
She, too, would bring to her husband's house delight and  
abundance,  
Filling it with love and the ruddy faces of children.

## II

Now had the season returned, when the nights grow colder  
and longer,  
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion enters.  
Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from the ice-  
bound,  
Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical islands.  
Harvests were gathered in; and wild with the winds of  
September  
Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old with the  
angel.  
All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.  
Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded their  
honey  
Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunters asserted  
Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the  
foxes.  
Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed that beauti-  
ful season,  
Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer of All-  
Saints!  
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the  
landscape  
Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of childhood.  
Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless heart of  
the ocean  
Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in harmony  
blended.  
Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in the farm-  
yards,

Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of pigeons,  
All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love, and the  
    great sun  
Looked with the eye of love through the golden vapors  
    around him;  
While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and yellow,  
Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering tree of  
    the forest  
Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned with mantles  
    and jewels.<sup>1</sup>

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection and  
    stillness.  
Day with its burden and heat had departed, and twilight  
    descending  
Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the herds  
    to the homestead.  
Pawing the ground they came, and resting their necks on  
    each other,  
And with their nostrils distended inhaling the freshness of  
    evening.  
Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer,  
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved  
    from her collar,  
Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human affection.  
Then came the shepherd back with his bleating flocks from  
    the seaside,  
Where was their favorite pasture. Behind them followed  
    the watch-dog,  
Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride of his  
    instinct,  
Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and superbly  
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the stragglers;  
Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept; their pro-  
    tector,  
When from the forest at night, through the starry silence  
    the wolves howled.  
Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from the  
    marshes,

<sup>1</sup> Evelyn's *Silva*, ii, 53. (LONGFELLOW).

Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odor.  
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their manes and  
their fetlocks,  
While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous  
saddles,  
Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with tassels of  
crimson,  
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blossoms.  
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their udders  
Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud and in regular  
cadence  
Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets descended.  
Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard in the  
farm-yard,  
Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into stillness;  
Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of the barn-  
doors,  
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace, idly the  
farmer  
Sat in his elbow-chair and watched how the flames and the  
smoke-wreaths  
Struggled together like foes in a burning city. Behind him,  
Nodding and mocking along the wall, with gestures fantastic,  
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away into dark-  
ness.  
Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his arm-chair  
Laughed in the flickering light; and the pewter plates on  
the dresser  
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies the  
sunshine.  
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of Christ-  
mas,  
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before him  
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vine-  
yards.  
Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline seated,  
Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the corner behind  
her.

Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its diligent  
 shuttle,  
 While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the drone  
 of a bagpipe,  
 Followed the old man's song and united the fragments  
 together.  
 As in a church, when the chant of the choir at intervals  
 ceases,  
 Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the priest at  
 the altar,  
 So, in each pause of the song, with measured motion the  
 clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard, and, suddenly  
 lifted,  
 Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung back on its  
 hinges.  
 Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil the  
 blacksmith,  
 And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who was with  
 him.  
 'Welcome!' the farmer exclaimed, as their footsteps paused  
 on the threshold,  
 'Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy place on the  
 settle  
 Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty without  
 thee;  
 Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box of  
 tobacco;  
 Never so much thyself art thou as when through the curling  
 Smoke of the pipe or the forge thy friendly and jovial face  
 gleams  
 Round and red as the harvest moon through the mist of the  
 marshes.'  
 Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil the  
 blacksmith,  
 Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the fire-  
 side:—  
 'Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest and thy  
 ballad!

Ever in cheerfullest mood art thou, when others are filled  
with

Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before them.  
Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up a  
horseshoe.'

Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline brought  
him,

And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly  
continued:—

'Four days now are passed since the English ships at their  
anchors

Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their cannon pointed  
against us.

What their design may be is unknown; but all are com-  
manded

On the morrow to meet in the church, where his Majesty's  
mandate

Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas! in the mean  
time

Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people.'

Then made answer the farmer: 'Perhaps some friendlier  
purpose

Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests in  
England

By untimely rains or untimelier heat have been blighted,  
And from our bursting barns they would feed their cattle  
and children.'

'Not so thinketh the folk in the village,' said, warmly, the  
blacksmith,

Shaking his head, as in doubt; then, heaving a sigh, he  
continued:—

'Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port  
Royal.

Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its out-  
skirts,

Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-morrow.  
Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons of all  
kinds;

Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the scythe of  
the mower.'

Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial farmer :—  
' Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks and our  
cornfields,  
Safer within these peaceful dikes, besieged by the ocean,  
Than our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy's cannon.  
Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no shadow of  
sorrow  
Fall on this house and earth; for this is the night of the  
contract.  
Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of the  
village  
Strongly have built them and well; and, breaking the glebe  
round about them,  
Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for a  
twelvemonth.  
René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers and ink-  
horn.  
Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy of our  
children?'  
As apart by the window she stood, with her hand in her  
lover's,  
Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her father had  
spoken,  
And, as they died on his lips, the worthy notary entered.

## III

Bent like a laboring oar, that toils in the surf of the ocean,  
Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the notary  
public;  
Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize,  
hung  
Over his shoulders; his forehead was high; and glasses with  
horn bows  
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.  
Father of twenty children was he, and more than a hundred  
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his great  
watch tick.  
Four long years in the times of the war had he languished  
a captive,



Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of the English.

Now, though warier grown, without all guile or suspicion,  
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple, and child-like.

He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children;  
For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the forest,  
And of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses,

And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who unchristened

Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers of children;

And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the stable,  
And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a nutshell,

And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover and horseshoes,

With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village.

Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the blacksmith,

Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending his right hand,

‘Father Leblanc,’ he exclaimed, ‘thou hast heard the talk in the village,

And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these ships and their errand.’

Then with modest demeanor made answer the notary public,—

‘Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am never the wiser;

And what their errand may be I know not better than others.

Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil intention  
Brings them here, for we are at peace; and why then molest us?’

‘God’s name!’ shouted the hasty and somewhat irascible blacksmith;

‘Must we in all things look for the how, and the why, and the wherefore?’



Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the strongest!

But without heeding his warmth, continued the notary public,—

‘Man is unjust, but God is just; and finally justice Triumphs; and well I remember a story, that often consoled me,

When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at Port Royal.’

This was the old man’s favorite tale, and he loved to repeat it

When his neighbors complained that any injustice was done them.

‘Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer remember, Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in its left hand,

And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice presided Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes of the people.

Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of the balance,

Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sunshine above them.

But in the course of time the laws of the land were corrupted;

Might took the place of right, and the weak were oppressed, and the mighty

Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a nobleman’s palace

That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a suspicion Fell on an orphan girl who lived as a maid in the household. She, after form of trial condemned to die on the scaffold, Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of Justice. As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit ascended, Lo! o’er the city a tempest rose; and the bolts of the thunder Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath from its left hand

Down on the pavement below the clattering scales of the balance,

And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a magpie,  
 Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls was in-  
     woven.'

Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was ended, the  
     blacksmith

Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no  
     language;

All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his face, as  
     the vapors

Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the  
     winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table,  
 Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with home-  
     brewed

Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the village  
     of Grand-Pré;

While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and ink-  
     horn,

Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of the  
     parties,

Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in  
     cattle.

Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were com-  
     pleted,

And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on the  
     margin.

Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the  
     table

Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver;

And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and the bride-  
     groom,

Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare.

Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and  
     departed,

While in silence the others sat and mused by the fireside,

Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its corner.

Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention the old  
     men

Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manœuvre,

Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was made in  
the king-row.

Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window's em-  
brasure,

Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding the moon  
rise

Over the pallid sea, and the silvery mists of the meadows.  
Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,  
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the bell from the  
belfry

Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and straight-  
way

Rose the guests and departed; and silence reigned in the  
household.

Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the door-  
step

Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with glad-  
ness.

Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the  
hearth-stone,

And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.  
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline followed.  
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,  
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.  
Silent she passed the hall, and entered the door of her  
chamber.

Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and its  
clothes-press

Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully  
folded

Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline  
woven.

This was the precious dower she would bring to her husband  
in marriage,

Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a  
housewife.

Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant  
moonlight

Streamed through the windows, and lighted the room, till  
the heart of the maiden  
Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of  
the ocean.  
Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood  
with  
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her chamber!  
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the  
orchard,  
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her lamp  
and her shadow.  
Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling of  
sadness  
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in the  
moonlight  
Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a moment.  
And, as she gazed from the window, she saw serenely the  
moon pass  
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her  
footsteps,  
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with  
Hagar!

## IV

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on the village of Grand  
Pré.  
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of Minas,  
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were riding  
at anchor.  
Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous labor  
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the  
morning.  
Now from the country around, from the farms and neighboring  
hamlets,  
Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian peasants.  
Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from the young  
folk  
Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous  
meadows,

Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels in the  
greensward,  
Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on the  
highway.  
Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labor were  
silenced.  
Thronged were the streets with people; and noisy groups at  
the house-doors  
Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossipped together.  
Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and  
feasted;  
For with this simple people, who lived like brothers together,  
All things were held in common, and what one had was  
another's.  
Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abundant:  
For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father;  
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome and  
gladness  
Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she gave  
it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,  
Stript of its golden fruit, was spread the feast of betrothal.  
There in the shade of the porch were the priest and the  
notary seated;  
There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the blacksmith.  
Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and the  
beehives,  
Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of hearts  
and of waistcoats.  
Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played on his  
snow-white  
Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the jolly face of the  
fiddler  
Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown from the  
embers.  
Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,  
*Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres*, and *Le Carillon de Dun-*  
*querque*,  
And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.

Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances  
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows;  
Old folk and young together, and children mingled among  
them.

Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter!  
Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the black-smith!

So passed the morning away. And lo! with a summons  
sonorous  
Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows a  
drum beat.  
Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without, in  
the churchyard,  
Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung  
on the headstones  
Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh from the  
forest.  
Then came the guard from the ships, and marching proudly  
among them  
Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dissonant clangor  
Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling and  
casement,—  
Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal  
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of the  
soldiers.  
Then uprose their commander, and spake from the steps of  
the altar,  
Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal com-  
mission.  
'You are convened this day,' he said, 'by his Majesty's  
orders.  
Clement and kind has he been; but how you have answered  
his kindness,  
Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and my  
temper  
Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be  
grievous.  
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our mon-  
arch;

Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle of all  
kinds  
Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves from this  
province  
Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell  
there  
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people!  
Prisoners now I declare you; for such is his Majesty's  
pleasure!  
As, when the air is serene in sultry solstice of summer,  
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the hail-  
stones  
Beats down the farmer's corn in the field and shatters his  
windows,  
Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch from  
the house-roofs,  
Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their enclosures;  
So on the hearts of the people descended the words of the  
speaker.  
Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder, and then rose  
Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger,  
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to the door-  
way.  
Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and fierce impre-  
cations  
Rang through the house of prayer; and high o'er the heads  
of the others  
Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the black-  
smith,  
As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.  
Flushed was his face and distorted with passion; and wildly  
he shouted,—  
'Down with the tyrants of England! we never have sworn  
them allegiance!  
Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our homes  
and our harvests!'  
More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand of  
a soldier  
Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to the  
pavement.



In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry contention,  
Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician  
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the  
altar.

Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into  
silence

All that clamorous throng; and thus he spake to his  
people;

Deep were his tones and solemn; in accents measured and  
mournful

Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly the clock  
strikes.

'What is this that ye do, my children? what madness has  
seized you?

Forty years of my life have I labored among you, and taught  
you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another!

Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers and  
privations?

Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and for-  
giveness?

This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you  
profane it

Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with  
hatred?

Lo! where the crucified Christ from his cross is gazing upon  
you!

See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy com-  
passion!

Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, "O Father, for-  
give them!"

Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked  
assail us,

Let us repeat it now, and say, "O Father, forgive them!"

Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his  
people

Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the passionate  
outbreak,

While they repeated his prayer, and said, 'O Father, for-  
give them!'



Then came the evening service. The tapers gleamed from  
 the altar.  
 Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and the people  
 responded,  
 Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and the Ave  
 Maria  
 Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls, with devo-  
 tion translated,  
 Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah ascending to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings of ill,  
 and on all sides  
 Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women and  
 children.  
 Long at her father's door Evangeline stood, with her right  
 hand  
 Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun, that,  
 descending,  
 Lighted the village street with mysterious splendor, and  
 roofed each  
 Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and emblazoned its  
 windows.  
 Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth on the  
 table;  
 There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fragrant with  
 wild-flowers;  
 There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese fresh brought  
 from the dairy,  
 And, at the head of the board, the great arm-chair of the  
 farmer.  
 Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as the  
 sunset  
 Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad ambrosial  
 meadows.  
 Ah! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,  
 And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial as-  
 cended,—  
 Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness, and  
 patience!  
 Then, all-forgetful of self, she wandered into the village,

Cheering with looks and words the mournful hearts of the  
women,  
As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps they de-  
parted,  
Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet of their  
children.  
Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glimmering  
vapors  
Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet descending  
from Sinai.  
Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evangeline  
lingered.  
All was silent within; and in vain at the door and the  
windows  
Stood she, and listened and looked, till, overcome by emotion,  
'Gabriel!' cried she aloud with tremulous voice; but no  
answer  
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier grave  
of the living.  
Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house of her  
father.  
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board was the  
supper untasted,  
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with phantoms  
of terror.  
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her  
chamber.  
In the dead of the night she heard the disconsolate rain fall  
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree by the  
window.  
Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the echoing  
thunder  
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world He  
created!  
Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the justice  
of Heaven;  
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully slumbered  
till morning.

## v

Four times the sun had risen and set; and now on the fifth  
day  
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the farm-  
house.  
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,  
Came from the neighboring hamlets and farms the Acadian  
women,  
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods to the  
sea-shore,  
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their  
dwellings,  
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and the  
woodland.  
Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on the  
oxen,  
While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of  
playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried; and there on  
the sea-beach  
Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants.  
All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats  
ply;  
All day long the wains came laboring down from the  
village.  
Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting,  
Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the  
churchyard.  
Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the  
church-doors  
Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy  
procession  
Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.  
Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and  
their country,  
Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and  
wayworn,  
So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended

Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and  
their daughters.

Foremost the young men came; and, raising together their  
voices,

Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic Missions:—

‘Sacred heart of the Saviour! O inexhaustible fountain!

Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and  
patience!’

Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood  
by the wayside

Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine  
above them

Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,  
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction,—

Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession approached  
her,

And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.

Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,  
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and  
whispered,—

‘Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another

Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may  
happen!’

Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused, for her  
father

Saw she slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was his  
aspect!

Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his  
eye, and his footstep

Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy heart in his  
bosom.

But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and em-  
braced him,

Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort  
availed not.

Thus to the Gaspereau’s mouth moved on that mournful pro-  
cession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of embarking.

Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confusion  
Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late,  
saw their children

Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest entreaties.

So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,  
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with her father.

Half the task was not done when the sun went down, and the twilight

Deepened and darkened around; and in haste the refluent ocean

Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the sand-beach

Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slippery sea-weed.

Farther back in the midst of the household goods and the wagons,

Like to a gypsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,

All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near them,

Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian farmers.

Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing ocean,

Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and leaving  
Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the sailors.

Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their pastures;

Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk from their udders;

Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the farm-yard,—

Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the milk-maid.

Silence reigned in the streets; from the church no Angelus sounded,

Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires had been  
kindled,  
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from wrecks in  
the tempest.  
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces were  
gathered,  
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the crying of  
children.  
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth in his  
parish,  
Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing and  
cheering,  
Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate sea-shore.  
Thus he approached the place where Evangeline sat with her  
father,  
And in the flickering light beheld the face of the old man,  
Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either thought or  
emotion,  
E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands have been  
taken.  
Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses to cheer  
him,  
Vainly offered him food; yet he moved not, he looked not,  
he spake not,  
But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering fire-  
light.  
'*Benedicite!*' murmured the priest, in tones of compassion.  
More he fain would have said, but his heart was full, and  
his accents  
Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a child on a  
threshold,  
Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful presence of  
sorrow.  
Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of the  
maiden,  
Raising his tearful eyes to the silent stars that above them  
Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs and sorrows  
of mortals.  
Then sat he down at her side, and they wept together in  
silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn the  
blood-red  
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the  
horizon  
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon the mountain  
and meadow,  
Seizing the rocks and the rivers and piling huge shadows  
together.  
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs of the  
village,  
Gleamed on the sky and sea, and the ships that lay in the  
roadstead.  
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of flame  
were  
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the quivering  
hands of a martyr.  
Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning thatch,  
and, uplifting,  
Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a hundred  
house-tops  
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the shore and  
on shipboard.  
Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in their  
anguish,  
'We shall behold no more our homes in the village of Grand-  
Pré!'  
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the farm-  
yards,  
Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the lowing of  
cattle  
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs inter-  
rupted.  
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the sleeping  
encampments  
Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the Nebraska,  
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the speed of  
the whirlwind,  
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the river.



Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the herds  
and the horses  
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly rushed o'er  
the meadows.

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the priest and  
the maiden  
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened  
before them:  
And as they turned at length to speak to their silent com-  
panion,  
Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad on  
the sea-shore  
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had departed.  
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the maiden  
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her terror.  
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on his  
bosom.  
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious slumber;  
And when she awoke from the trance, she beheld a multi-  
tude near her.  
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gazing  
upon her,  
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest compassion.  
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the landscape,  
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces around  
her,  
And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering senses.  
Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people,—  
'Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season  
Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of  
our exile,  
Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the church-  
yard.'  
Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by  
the sea-side,  
Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,  
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-  
Pré.  
And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,



Lo! with a mournful sound, like the voice of a vast congregation,  
Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the dirges.  
'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,  
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying landward.  
Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking;  
And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out of the harbor,  
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in ruins.

## PART THE SECOND

## I

MANY a weary year had passed since the burning of Grand-Pré,  
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,  
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile,  
Exile without an end, and without an example in story.  
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed;  
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the wind  
from the northeast  
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the Banks of  
Newfoundland.  
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from city to  
city,  
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern savannas,—  
From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where the  
Father of Waters  
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to the  
ocean,  
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of the mammoth.  
Friends they sought and homes; and many, despairing  
heart-broken,

Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a friend nor  
a fireside.

Written their history stands on tablets of stone in the  
churchyards.

Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and  
wandered,

Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all  
things.

Fair was she and young; but, alas! before her extended,  
Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with its path-  
way

Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed and suf-  
fered before her,

Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead and  
abandoned,

As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is marked by  
Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach in the  
sunshine.

Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, un-  
finished;

As if a morning of June, with all its music and sunshine,  
Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly descended  
Into the east again, from whence it late had arisen.

Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the fever  
within her,

Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of the  
spirit,

She would commence again her endless search and en-  
deavor;

Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on the crosses  
and tombstones,

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps in  
its bosom

He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber beside  
him.

Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper,  
Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forward.

Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her beloved  
and known him,

But it was long ago, in some far-off place or forgotten.

'Gabriel Lajeunesse!' they said; 'Oh yes! we have seen him.

He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have gone to the prairies;

Coueurs-des-Bois are they, and famous hunters and trappers.'

'Gabriel Lajeunesse!' said others; 'Oh yes! we have seen him.

He is a Voyageur in the lowlands of Louisiana.'

Then would they say, 'Dear child! why dream and wait for him longer?

Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others

Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as loyal?

Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary's son, who has loved thee

Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be happy!

Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Catherine's tresses."

Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly, 'I cannot!

Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand, and not elsewhere.

For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway,

Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness.'

Thereupon the priest, her friend and father-confessor,

Said, with a smile, 'O daughter! thy God thus speaketh within thee!

Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted;

If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning

Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshment;

That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.

Patience; accomplish thy labor; accomplish thy work of affection!

Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike.

<sup>1</sup> There is a common expression in French, 'coiffer Sainte Catherine,' meaning to be an old maid.

Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the heart is  
made godlike,

Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy  
of heaven!'

Cheered by the good man's words, Evangeline labored and  
waited.

Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the ocean,  
But with its sound there was mingled a voice that whispered,  
'Despair not!'

Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheerless dis-  
comfort,

Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of  
existence.

Let me essay, O Muse! to follow the wanderer's footsteps;—  
Not through each devious path, each changeful year of  
existence,

But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course through the  
valley:

Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam of  
its water

Here and there, in some open space, and at intervals only;  
Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan glooms that  
conceal it,

Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous murmur;  
Happy, at length, if he find the spot where it reaches an  
outlet.

## II

It was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful River,  
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wabash,  
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mississippi,  
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boat-  
men.

It was a band of exiles: a raft, as it were, from the ship-  
wrecked

Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating together,  
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a common mis-  
fortune;

Men and women and children, who, guided by hope or by  
hearsay,

Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-acred  
farmers

On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Opelousas.  
With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the Father  
Felician.

Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness sombre  
with forests,

Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river;  
Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped on its  
borders.

Now through rushing chutes, among green islands, where  
plumelike

Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept with  
the current,

Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery sand-bars  
Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves of their  
margin,

Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of pelicans  
waded.

Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of the river,  
Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant gardens,  
Stood the houses of planters, with negro-cabins and dove-  
cots.

They were approaching the region where reigns perpetual  
summer,

Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of orange and  
citron,

Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the eastward.  
They, too, swerved from their course; and entering the  
Bayou of Plaquemine,

Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious waters,  
Which, like a network of steel, extended in every direction.  
Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs of the  
cypress

Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-air  
Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient  
cathedrals.

Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by the  
herons

Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning at sunset,

Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac  
laughter.

Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on  
the water,

Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustaining the  
arches,

Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through chinks  
in a ruin.

Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things around  
them;

And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder and  
sadness,—

Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that cannot be com-  
passed.

As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the prairies,  
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking  
mimosa,

So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of evil,  
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom has  
attained it.✓

But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision, that  
faintly

Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on through the  
moonlight.

It was the thought of her brain that assumed the shape of a  
phantom.

Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel wandered before  
her,

And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer and  
nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose one of the  
oarsmen,

And, as a signal sound, if others like them peradventure  
Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams, blew a blast  
on his bugle.

Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors leafy the  
blast rang,

Breaking the seal of silence, and giving tongues to the  
forest.

Soundless above them the banners of moss just stirred to  
the music.

Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the distance,  
Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant branches;  
But not a voice replied; no answer came from the darkness;  
And, when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain was  
the silence.

Then Evangeline slept; but the boatmen rowed through the  
midnight,

Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian boat-songs,  
Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers,  
While through the night were heard the mysterious sounds of  
the desert,

Far off,—indistinct,—as of wave or wind in the forest,  
Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of the  
grim alligator.

Thus ere another noon they emerged from the shades; and  
before them

Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.

Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations  
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the  
lotus

Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen.

Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,

And with the heat of noon; and numberless sylvan islands,  
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges of  
roses,

Near to whose shores they glided along, invited to slumber.

Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended.

Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the  
margin,

Safely their boat was moored; and scattered about on the  
greensward,

Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers  
slumbered.

Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.

Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the  
grapevine



Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,  
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending,  
Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blossom to  
blossom.

Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered be-  
neath it.

Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an opening  
heaven

Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celestial.

Nearer, and ever nearer, among the numberless islands,  
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,  
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and  
trappers.

Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison and  
beaver.

At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and  
careworn.

Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a  
sadness

Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly written.  
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and rest-  
less,

Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow.  
Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the island,  
But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos,  
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the  
willows;

All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen, were  
the sleepers.

Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering  
maiden.

Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the  
prairie.

After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the  
distance,

As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden  
Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, 'O Father Felician!  
Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders.  
Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition?



Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit?'  
Then, with a blush, she added, 'Alas for my credulous fancy!  
Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning.'  
But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as he  
answered,—

'Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor are they to me  
without meaning.

Feeling is deep and still; and the word that floats on the  
surface

Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor is  
hidden.

Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world calls  
illusions.

Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far away to the southward,  
On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St. Maur and  
St. Martin.

There the long-wandering bride shall be given again to her  
bridegroom,

There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and his sheep-  
fold.

Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of fruit-  
trees;

Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest of heavens  
Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of the  
forest.

They who dwell there have named it the Eden of Louisiana!'

With these words of cheer they arose and continued their  
journey.

Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon  
Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er the land-  
scape;

Twinkling vapors arose; and sky and water and forest  
Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled  
together.

Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver,  
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless  
water.

Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness.  
Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling

Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around  
her.

Then from a neighboring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest  
of singers,

Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,  
Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music,  
That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed  
silent to listen.

Plaintive at first were the tones and sad: then soaring to  
madness

Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bac-  
chantes.

Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low lamenta-  
tion;

Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in  
derision,

As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops  
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the  
branches.

With such a prelude as this, and hearts that throbbed with  
emotion,

Slowly they entered the Têche, where it flows through the  
green Opelousas,

And, through the amber air, above the crest of the wood-  
land,

Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neighboring  
dwelling;—

Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing of cattle.

### III

Near to the bank of the river, o'ershadowed by oaks, from  
whose branches

Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe flaunted,  
Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets at Yule-  
tide,

Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herdsman. A  
garden

Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant blossoms,

Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself was of  
timbers

Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together.  
Large and low was the roof; and on slender columns supported,

Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious veranda,  
Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended around it.  
At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the garden,  
Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual symbol,  
Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions of rivals.  
Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow and  
sunshine

Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house itself was in  
shadow,

And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly expanding  
Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke rose.

In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran a path-  
way

Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the limitless  
prairie,

Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly descending.

Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy canvas  
Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless calm in the  
tropics,

Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of grape-vines.

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of the  
prairie,

Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and stirrups,  
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of deerskin.  
Broad and brown was the face that from under the Spanish  
sombrero

Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look of its  
master.

Round about him were numberless herds of kine, that were  
grazing

Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapory freshness  
That uprose from the river, and spread itself over the land-  
scape.

Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and expanding

Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that resounded  
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp air of the  
evening.

Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the cattle  
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of ocean.  
Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed o'er the  
prairie,

And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the distance.  
Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through the gate  
of the garden

Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden advancing to  
meet him.

Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement, and  
forward

Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder;  
When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil the black-  
smith.

Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the garden.  
There in an arbor of roses with endless question and answer  
Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly  
embraces,

Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and thought-  
ful.

Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not; and now dark doubts and  
misgivings

Stole o'er the maiden's heart; and Basil, somewhat embar-  
rassed,

Broke the silence and said, 'If you came by the Atchafalaya,  
How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on  
the bayous?'

Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed.  
Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a tremulous  
accent,

'Gone? is Gabriel gone?' and, concealing her face on his  
shoulder,

All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept and  
lamented.

Then the good Basil said,—and his voice grew blithe as he  
said it,—

'Be of good cheer, my child; it is only to-day he departed.

Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my herds and my horses.

Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his spirit  
Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet existence,  
Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,  
Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,  
He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens,  
Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and sent him

Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.

Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark Mountains,

Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the beaver.

Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow the fugitive lover;

He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams are against him.

Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of the morning

We will follow him fast, and bring him back to his prison.'

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the banks of the river,

Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael the fiddler.  
Long under Basil's roof had he lived like a god on Olympus,  
Having no other care than dispensing music to mortals.  
Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his fiddle.

'Long live Michael,' they cried, 'our brave Acadian minstrel!'

As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession; and straightway

Father Felician advanced with Evangeline, greeting the old man

Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while Basil, enraptured,

Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and gossips,  
Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers and daughters.

Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the ci-devant  
blacksmith,  
All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal demeanor;  
Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the soil and the  
climate,  
And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were his who  
would take them;  
Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would go and do  
likewise.  
Thus they ascended the steps, and crossing the breezy ver-  
anda,  
Entered the hall of the house, where already the supper of  
Basil  
Waited his late return; and they rested and feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.  
All was silent without, and, illuming the landscape with  
silver,  
Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars; but within  
doors,  
Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the glim-  
mering lamplight.  
Then from his station aloft, at the head of the table, the  
herdsman  
Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless  
profusion.  
Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet Natchitoches  
tobacco,  
Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and smiled as they  
listened:—  
‘Welcome once more, my friends, who long have been  
friendless and homeless,  
Welcome once more to a home, that is better perchance than  
the old one!  
Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the rivers;  
Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the farmer.  
Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil, as a keel  
- through the water.  
All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom; and  
grass grows

More in a single night than a whole Canadian summer.  
Here, too, numberless herds run wild and unclaimed in the  
prairies;  
Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and forests of  
timber  
With a few blows of the axe are hewn and framed into  
houses.  
After your houses are built, and your fields are yellow with  
harvests,  
No King George of England shall drive you away from your  
homesteads,  
Burning your dwellings and barns, and stealing your farms  
and your cattle.'  
Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud from his  
nostrils,  
While his huge, brown hand came thundering down on the  
table,  
So that the guests all started; and Father Felician, astounded,  
Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to his  
nostrils.  
But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were milder  
and gayer:—  
'Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of the  
fever!  
For it is not like that of our cold Acadian climate,  
Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a  
nutshell!'  
Then there were voices heard at the door, and footsteps  
approaching  
Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the breezy ver-  
anda.  
It was the neighboring Creoles and small Acadian planters,  
Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the Herds-  
man.  
Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and neighbors:  
Friend clasped friend in his arms; and they who before were  
as strangers,  
Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each  
other,  
Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together.



But in the neighboring hall a strain of music, proceeding  
From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious fiddle,  
Broke up all further speech. Away, like children delighted,  
All things forgotten beside, they gave themselves to the  
    maddening  
Whirl of the giddy dance, as it swept and swayed to the  
    music,  
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of fluttering garments.

    Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the priest and  
    the herdsman  
Sat, conversing together of past and present and future;  
While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for within her  
Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of the music  
Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible sadness  
Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into the  
    garden.  
Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of the  
    forest,  
Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon. On the  
    river  
Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous gleam  
    of the moonlight,  
Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and devious  
    spirit.  
Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers of the  
    garden  
Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers and  
    confessions  
Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Carthusian.  
Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with shadows  
    and night-dews,  
Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the magical  
    moonlight  
Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable longings,  
As, through the garden-gate, and beneath the shade of the  
    oak-trees,  
Passed she along the path to the edge of the measureless  
    prairie.



Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fire-flies  
Gleamed and floated away in mingled and infinite numbers.  
Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the heavens,  
Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to marvel and  
    worship,  
Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of that  
    temple,  
As if a hand had appeared and written upon them, 'Uphar-  
    sin.'  
And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and the fire-  
    flies,  
Wandered alone, and she cried, 'O Gabriel! O my beloved!  
Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold thee?  
Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does not reach  
    me?  
Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the prairie!  
Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the woodlands  
    around me!  
Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from labor,  
Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me in thy  
    slumbers!  
When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded about  
    thee?'  
Loud and sudden and near the notes of a whippoorwill  
    sounded  
Like a flute in the woods; and anon, through the neighbor-  
    ing thickets,  
Farther and farther away it floated and dropped into  
    silence.  
'Patience!' whispered the oaks from oracular caverns of  
    darkness:  
And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded, 'To-  
    morrow!'

Bright rose the sun next day; and all the flowers of the  
    garden  
Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and anointed his  
    tresses  
With the delicious balm that they bore in their vases of  
    crystal.

‘Farewell!’ said the priest, as he stood at the shadowy  
threshold;  
‘See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his fasting  
and famine,  
And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the bridegroom  
was coming.’  
‘Farewell!’ answered the maiden, and, smiling, with Basil  
descended  
Down to the river’s brink, where the boatmen already were  
waiting.  
Thus beginning their journey with morning, and sunshine,  
and gladness,  
Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was speeding  
before them,  
Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the desert.  
Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that succeeded,  
Found they the trace of his course, in lake or forest or  
river,  
Nor, after many days, had they found him; but vague and  
uncertain  
Rumors alone were their guides through a wild and desolate  
country;  
Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of Adayes,  
Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from the garru-  
lous landlord,  
That on the day before, with horses and guides and com-  
panions,  
Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the prairies.

## IV

Far in the West there lies a desert land, where the moun-  
tains  
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous  
summits.  
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the gorge,  
like a gateway,  
Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant’s  
wagon,  
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and Owyhee.

Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-river  
Mountains,  
Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps the  
Nebraska;  
And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the Spanish  
sierras,  
Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the wind of the  
desert,  
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend to the  
ocean,  
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn vibra-  
tions.  
Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beauti-  
ful prairies;  
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sun-  
shine,  
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.  
Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the elk and the  
roebuck;  
Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of riderless  
horses;  
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with  
travel;  
Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's children,  
Staining the desert with blood; and above their terrible war-  
trails  
Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,  
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered in  
battle,  
By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.  
Here and there rise smokes from the camps of these savage  
marauders;  
Here and there rise groves from the margins of swift-  
running rivers;  
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the  
desert,  
Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by the  
brook-side,  
And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,  
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them.

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark Mountains,  
Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers behind him,  
Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden and Basil  
Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to o'ertake him.  
Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the smoke of his camp-fire  
Rise in the morning air from the distant plain; but at night-fall,  
When they had reached the place they found only embers and ashes.  
And, though their hearts were sad at times and their bodies were weary,  
Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata Morgana  
Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated and vanished before them.

Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there silently entered  
Into their little camp an Indian woman, whose features  
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as great as her sorrow.  
She was a Shawnee woman returning home to her people,  
From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel Camanches,  
Where her Canadian husband, a Coureur-des-Bois, had been murdered.  
Touched were their hearts at her story, and warmest and friendliest welcome  
Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and feasted among them  
On the buffalo-meat and the venison cooked on the embers.  
But when their meal was done, and Basil and all his companions,  
Worn with the long day's march and the chase of the deer and the bison,  
Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept where the quivering fire-light

Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms wrapped  
up in their blankets,  
Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat and repeated  
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her Indian  
accent,  
All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and pains, and  
reverses.  
Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know that another  
Hapless heart like her own had loved and had been disap-  
pointed.  
Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and woman's com-  
passion,  
Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered was  
near her,  
She in turn related her love and all its disasters.  
Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when she had  
ended  
Still was mute; but at length, as if a mysterious horror  
Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated the tale  
of the Mowis;  
Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded a  
maiden,  
But, when the morning came, arose and passed from the  
wigwam,  
Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sun-  
shine,  
Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far into  
the forest.  
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed like a weird  
incantation,  
Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a  
phantom,  
That through the pipes o'er her father's lodge, in the hush  
of the twilight,  
Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered love to the  
maiden,  
Till she followed his green and waving plume through the  
forest,  
And nevermore returned, nor was seen again by her people.  
Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evangeline listened

To the soft flow of her magical words, till the region around  
her  
Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy guest the  
enchantress.  
Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains the moon  
rose,  
Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious splendor  
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and filling the  
woodland.  
With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and the branches  
Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible whispers.  
Filled with the thoughts of love was Evangeline's heart,  
but a secret,  
Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite terror,  
As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the nest of the  
swallow.  
It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region of spirits  
Seemed to float in the air of night; and she felt for a mo-  
ment  
That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursuing a phan-  
tom.  
With this thought she slept, and the fear and the phantom  
had vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was resumed; and the  
Shawnee  
Said, as they journeyed along, 'On the western slope of  
these mountains  
Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief of the  
Mission.  
Much he teaches the people, and tells them of Mary and  
Jesus.  
Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with pain, as  
they hear him.'  
Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline an-  
swered,  
'Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us!'  
Thither they turned their steeds; and behind a spur of the  
mountains,  
Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,

And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,  
Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit  
Mission.

Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the vil-  
lage,

Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A crucifix  
fastened

High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grape-  
vines,

Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling be-  
neath it.

This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate  
arches

Of its aerial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,  
Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the  
branches.

Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer approach-  
ing,

Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devo-  
tions.

But when the service was done, and the benediction had  
fallen

Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from the hands  
of the sower,

Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers, and bade  
them

Welcome; and when they replied, he smiled with benignant  
expression,

Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother-tongue in the  
forest,

And, with words of kindness, conducted them into his wig-  
wam.

There upon mats and skins they reposed, and on cakes of the  
maize-ear

Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-gourd of the  
teacher.

Soon was their story told; and the priest with solemnity  
answered:—

‘Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel, seated  
On this mat by my side, where now the maiden reposes,



Told me this same sad tale; then arose and continued his  
journey!’  
Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with an accent  
of kindness;  
But on Evangeline’s heart fell his words as in winter the  
snow-flakes  
Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have departed.  
‘Far to the north he has gone,’ continued the priest; ‘but in  
autumn,  
When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission.’  
Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and sub-  
missive,  
‘Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and afflicted.’  
So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the  
morrow,  
Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and  
companions,  
Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the  
Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other,—  
Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that  
were springing  
Green from the ground when a stranger she came, now  
waving above her,  
Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing, and  
forming  
Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries pillaged by  
squirrels.  
Then in the golden weather the maize was husked, and the  
maidens  
Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened a lover,  
But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in the  
cornfield,  
Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought not her  
lover.  
‘Patience!’ the priest would say; ‘have faith, and thy prayer  
will be answered!’  
Look at this vigorous plant that lifts its head from the  
meadow,



See how its leaves are turned to the north, as true as the magnet;

This is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has planted  
Here in the houseless wild, to direct the traveller's journey  
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert. X  
Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,  
Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of fragrance,

But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odor is deadly.

Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter  
Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the dews  
of nepenthe.'

So came the autumn, and passed, and the winter,—yet  
Gabriel came not;

Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the robin  
and bluebird

Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel came not.  
But on the breath of the summer winds a rumor was wafted  
Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor of blossom.

Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan forests,  
Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw River.

And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes of St.  
Lawrence,

Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the Mission.  
When over weary ways, by long and perilous marches,  
She had attained at length the depths of the Michigan forests,  
Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to ruin!

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in seasons and  
places

Divers and distant far was seen the wandering maiden:—  
Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek Moravian Missions,  
Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the army,  
Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous cities.  
Like a phantom she came, and passed away unremembered.  
Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long  
journey;

Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.

Each succeeding year stole something away from her beauty,  
Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and the  
shadow.

Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of gray o'er  
her forehead,

Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly horizon,  
As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the morning.

## v

In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware  
waters,

Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the apostle,  
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city he  
founded.

There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem of  
beauty,

And the streets still re-echo the names of the trees of the  
forest,

As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose haunts they  
molested.

There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed, an exile,  
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a country.  
There old René Leblanc had died; and when he departed,  
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred descendants.  
Something at least there was in the friendly streets of the  
city,

Something that spake to her heart, and made her no longer  
a stranger;

And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of the  
Quakers,

For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country,  
Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and sisters.  
So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed endeavor,  
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncomplaining,  
Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts and  
her footsteps.

As from the mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning  
Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,  
Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,

So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world far  
below her,

Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and the pathway  
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in the  
distance.

Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,  
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld  
him,

Only more beautiful made by his death-like silence and  
absence.

Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not.  
Over him years had no power; he was not changed, but  
transfigured;

He had become to her heart as one who is dead, and not  
absent;

Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,  
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her.  
So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous spices,  
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with aroma.  
Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow  
Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her Saviour.  
Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy; frequenting  
Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of the city,  
Where distress and want concealed themselves from the  
sunlight,

Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neglected.  
Night after night, when the world was asleep, as the watch-  
man repeated

Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in the city,  
High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper.  
Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow through the  
suburbs

Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits for the  
market,

Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its watch-  
ings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city,  
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of wild  
pigeons,

Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in their craws  
but an acorn.

And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of September,  
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake in the  
meadow,

So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural margin,  
Spread to a brackish lake, the silver stream of existence.

Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm, the  
oppressor;

But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his anger;—  
Only, alas! the poor, who had neither friends nor attendants,  
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the homeless.  
Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadows and  
woodlands;—

Now the city surrounds it; but still, with its gateway and  
wicket

Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble walls seemed to  
echo

Softly the words of the Lord: 'The poor ye always have  
with you.'

Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of Mercy.  
The dying

Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to behold there  
Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splendor,  
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles,  
Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a distance.

Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city celestial,  
Into whose shining gates erelong their spirits would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted  
and silent,

Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the alms-  
house.

Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers in the  
garden;

And she paused on her way to gather the fairest among them,  
That the dying once more might rejoice in their fragrance  
and beauty.

Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the  
east-wind,

Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry  
 of Christ Church,  
 While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were  
 wafted  
 Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in their  
 church at Wicaco.  
 Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour on her  
 spirit:  
 Something within her said, 'At length thy trials are ended;'  
 And, with light in her looks, she entered the chambers of  
 sickness.  
 Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful attendants,  
 Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow, and in  
 silence  
 Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their  
 faces,  
 Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow by the  
 roadside.  
 Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered,  
 Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she passed, for her  
 presence  
 Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of a  
 prison.  
 And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the con-  
 soler,  
 Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it forever.  
 Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night time;  
 Vacant their places were, or filled already by strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of wonder,  
 Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart, while a shudder  
 Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets dropped  
 from her fingers,  
 And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom of the  
 morning.  
 Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible  
 anguish,  
 That the dying heard it, and started up from their pillows.  
 On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an old  
 man.

Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that shaded his temples;

But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment  
Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood;

So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.

Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever,  
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled its portals,

That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over.  
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted  
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in the darkness,

Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking and sinking.  
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations,

Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded

Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,  
'Gabriel! O my beloved!' and died away into silence.

Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his childhood;

Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,  
Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under their shadow,

As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.  
Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,  
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.

Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents unuttered

Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue  
would have spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him.

Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.

Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,  
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,  
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!  
And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,  
Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, 'Father, I thank  
thee!'

---

Still stands the forest primeval; but far away from its  
shadow,  
Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are  
sleeping.

Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,  
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed.  
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,  
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and  
forever,

Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are  
busy,

Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from  
their labors,

Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their  
journey!

Still stands the forest primeval; but under the shade of its  
branches

Dwells another race, with other customs and language.

Only along the shore of the mournful and misty Atlantic

Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from exile

Wandered back to their native land to die in its bosom.

In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are still  
busy;

Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of  
homespun,

And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,

While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced, neighboring  
ocean

Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the  
forest.



## JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

[1807-1892]

792

## THE ETERNAL GOODNESS

O FRIENDS! with whom my feet have trod  
The quiet aisles of prayer,  
Glad witness to your zeal for God  
And love of man I bear.

I trace your lines of argument;  
Your logic linked and strong  
I weigh as one who dreads dissent,  
And fears a doubt as wrong.

But still my human hands are weak  
To hold your iron creeds:  
Against the words ye bid me speak  
My heart within me pleads.

Who fathoms the Eternal Thought?  
Who talks of scheme and plan?  
The Lord is God! He needeth not  
The poor device of man.

I walk with bare, hushed feet the ground  
Ye tread with boldness shod;  
I dare not fix with mete and bound  
The love and power of God.

Ye praise his justice; even such  
His pitying love I deem:  
Ye seek a king; I fain would touch  
The robe that hath no seam.

Ye see the curse which overbroods  
A world of pain and loss;  
I hear our Lord's beatitudes  
And prayer upon the cross.



More than your schoolmen teach, within  
Myself, alas! I know:  
Too dark ye cannot paint the sin,  
Too small the merit show.

I bow my forehead to the dust,  
I veil mine eyes for shame,  
And urge, in trembling self-distrust,  
A prayer without a claim.

I see the wrong that round me lies,  
I feel the guilt within;  
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,  
The world confess its sin.

Yet, in the maddening maze of things,  
And tossed by storm and flood,  
To one fixed trust my spirit clings;  
I know that God is good!

Not mine to look where cherubim  
And seraphs may not see,  
But nothing can be good in Him  
Which evil is in me.

The wrong that pains my soul below  
I dare not throne above,  
I know not of his hate,—I know  
His goodness and his love.

I dimly guess from blessings known  
Of greater out of sight,  
And, with the chastened Psalmist, own  
His judgments too are right.

I long for household voices gone,  
For vanished smiles I long,  
But God hath led my dear ones on,  
And He can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath  
Of marvel or surprise,  
Assured alone that life and death  
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak  
To bear an untried pain,  
The bruised reed He will not break,  
But strengthen and sustain.

No offering of my own I have,  
Nor works my faith to prove;  
I can but give the gifts He gave,  
And plead his love for love.

O MOTHER EARTH! upon thy lap  
Thy weary ones receiving,  
And o'er them, silent as a dream,  
Thy grassy mantle weaving,  
Fold softly in thy long embrace  
That heart so worn and broken,  
And cool its pulse of fire beneath  
Thy shadows old and oaken.

Shut out from him the bitter word  
And serpent hiss of scorning;  
Nor let the storms of yesterday  
Disturb his quiet morning.  
Breathe over him forgetfulness  
Of all save deeds of kindness,  
And, save to smiles of grateful eyes,  
Press down his lids in blindness.

There, where with living ear and eye  
He heard Potomac's flowing,  
And, through his tall ancestral trees,  
Saw autumn's sunset glowing,

He sleeps, still looking to the west,  
Beneath the dark wood shadow,  
As if he still would see the sun  
Sink down on wave and meadow.

Bard, Sage, and Tribune! in himself  
All moods of mind contrasting,—  
The tenderest wail of human woe,  
The scorn like lightning blasting;  
The pathos which from rival eyes  
Unwilling tears could summon,  
The stinging taunt, the fiery burst  
Of hatred scarcely human!

Mirth, sparkling like a diamond shower,  
From lips of life-long sadness;  
Clear picturings of majestic thought  
Upon a ground of madness;  
And over all Romance and Song  
A classic beauty throwing,  
And laurelled Clio at his side  
Her storied pages showing.

All parties feared him: each in turn  
Beheld its schemes disjointed,  
As right or left his fatal glance  
And spectral finger pointed.  
Sworn foe of Cant, he smote it down  
With trenchant wit unsparing,  
And, mocking, rent with ruthless hand  
The robe Pretence was wearing.

Too honest or too proud to feign  
A love he never cherished,  
Beyond Virginia's border line  
His patriotism perished.  
While others hailed in distant skies  
Our eagle's dusky pinion,  
He only saw the mountain bird  
Stoop o'er his Old Dominion!

Still through each change of fortune strange,  
Racked nerve, and brain all burning,  
His loving faith in Mother-land  
Knew never shade of turning;  
By Britain's lakes, by Neva's tide,  
Whatever sky was o'er him,  
He heard her rivers' rushing sound,  
Her blue peaks rose before him.

He held his slaves, yet made withal  
No false and vain pretences,  
Nor paid a lying priest to seek  
For Scriptural defences.  
His harshest words of proud rebuke,  
His bitterest taunt and scorning,  
Fell fire-like on the Northern brow  
That bent to him in fawning.

He held his slaves; yet kept the while  
His reverence for the Human;  
In the dark vassals of his will  
He saw but Man and Woman!  
No hunter of God's outraged poor  
His Roanoke valley entered;  
No trader in the souls of men  
Across his threshold ventured.

And when the old and wearied man  
Lay down for his last sleeping,  
And at his side, a slave no more,  
His brother-man stood weeping,  
His latest thought, his latest breath,  
To Freedom's duty giving,  
With failing tongue and trembling hand  
The dying blest the living.

Oh, never bore his ancient State  
A truer son or braver!  
None trampling with a calmer scorn  
On foreign hate or favor.

He knew her faults, yet never stooped  
His proud and manly feeling  
To poor excuses of the wrong  
Or meanness of concealing.

But none beheld with clearer eye  
The plague-spot o'er her spreading,  
None heard more sure the steps of Doom  
Along her future treading.  
For her as for himself he spake,  
When, his gaunt frame upbracing,  
He traced with dying hand 'Remorse!'  
And perished in the tracing.

As from the grave where Henry sleeps,  
From Vernon's weeping willow,  
And from the grassy pall which hides  
The Sage of Monticello,  
So from the leaf-strewn burial-stone  
Of Randolph's lowly dwelling,  
Virginia! o'er thy land of slaves  
A warning voice is swelling!

And hark! from thy deserted fields  
Are sadder warnings spoken,  
From quenched hearths, where thy exiled sons  
Their household gods have broken.  
The curse is on thee,—wolves for men,  
And briers for corn-sheaves giving!  
Oh, more than all thy dead renown  
Were now one hero living!

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## MASSACHUSETTS TO VIRGINIA

THE blast from Freedom's Northern hills, upon its Southern  
way,  
Bears greeting to Virginia from Massachusetts Bay:  
No word of haughty challenging, nor battle bugle's peal,  
Nor steady tread of marching files, nor clang of horse-  
men's steel,

No trains of deep-mouthed cannon along our highways go;  
Around our silent arsenals untrodden lies the snow;  
And to the land-breeze of our ports, upon their errands far,  
A thousand sails of commerce swell, but none are spread  
for war.

We hear thy threats, Virginia! thy stormy words and high  
Swell harshly on the Southern winds which melt along  
our sky;  
Yet not one brown, hard hand foregoes its honest labor here,  
No hewer of our mountain oaks suspends his axe in fear.

Wild are the waves which lash the reefs along St. George's  
bank;  
Cold on the shores of Labrador the fog lies white and  
dank;  
Through storm, and wave, and blinding mist, stout are the  
hearts which man  
The fishing-smacks of Marblehead, the sea-boats of Cape  
Ann.

The cold north light and wintry sun glare on their icy  
forms,  
Bent grimly o'er their straining lines or wrestling with the  
storms;  
Free as the winds they drive before, rough as the waves  
they roam,  
They laugh to scorn the slaver's threat against their rocky  
home.

What means the Old Dominion? Hath she forgot the day  
When o'er her conquered valleys swept the Briton's steel  
array?  
How, side by side with sons of hers, the Massachusetts  
men  
Encountered Tarleton's charge of fire, and stout Cornwallis,  
then?

Forgets she how the Bay State, in answer to the call  
Of her old House of Burgesses, spoke out from Faneuil  
Hall?

When, echoing back her Henry's cry, came pulsing on  
each breath  
Of Northern winds the thrilling sounds of 'Liberty or  
Death!'

What asks the Old Dominion? If now her sons have proved  
False to their fathers' memory, false to the faith they loved;  
If she can scoff at Freedom, and its great charter spurn,  
Must we of Massachusetts from truth and duty turn?

We hunt your bondmen, flying from Slavery's hateful hell;  
Our voices, at your bidding, take up the bloodhound's yell;  
We gather, at your summons, above our fathers' graves,  
From Freedom's holy altar-horns to tear your wretched  
slaves!

Thank God! not yet so vilely can Massachusetts bow;  
The spirit of her early time is with her even now;  
Dream not because her Pilgrim blood moves slow and calm  
and cool,  
She thus can stoop her chainless neck, a sister's slave and  
tool!

All that a sister State should do, all that a free State may,  
Heart, hand, and purse we proffer, as in our early day;  
But that one dark loathsome burden ye must stagger with  
alone,  
And reap the bitter harvest which ye yourselves have sown!

Hold, while ye may, your struggling slaves, and burden  
God's free air  
With woman's shriek beneath the lash, and manhood's wild  
despair;  
Cling closer to the 'cleaving curse' that writes upon your  
plains  
The blasting of Almighty wrath against a land of chains.

Still shame your gallant ancestry, the cavaliers of old,  
By watching round the shambles where human flesh is  
sold;

Gloat o'er the new-born child, and count his market value,  
when  
The maddened mother's cry of woe shall pierce the slaver's  
den!

Lower than plummet soundeth, sink the Virginia name;  
Plant, if ye will, your fathers' graves with rankest weeds  
of shame;  
Be, if ye will, the scandal of God's fair universe;  
We wash our hands forever of your sin and shame and  
curse.

A voice from lips whereon the coal from Freedom's shrine  
hath been,  
Thrilled, as but yesterday, the hearts of Berkshire's moun-  
tain men:  
The echoes of that solemn voice are sadly lingering still  
In all our sunny valleys, on every wind-swept hill.

And when the prowling man-thief came hunting for his  
prey  
Beneath the very shadow of Bunker's shaft of gray,  
How, through the free lips of the son, the father's warning  
spoke;  
How, from its bonds of trade and sect, the Pilgrim city  
broke!

A hundred thousand right arms were lifted up on high,  
A hundred thousand voices sent back their loud reply;  
Through the thronged towns of Essex the startling sum-  
mons rang,  
And up from bench and loom and wheel her young mechanics  
sprang!

The voice of free, broad Middlesex, of thousands as of one,  
The shaft of Bunker calling to that of Lexington;  
From Norfolk's ancient villages, from Plymouth's rocky  
bound  
To where Nantucket feels the arms of ocean close her  
round;



From rich and rural Worcester, where through the calm  
    repose  
Of cultured vales and fringing woods the gentle Nashua  
    flows,  
To where Wachuset's wintry blasts the mountain larches  
    stir,  
Swelled up to Heaven the thrilling cry of 'God save  
    Latimer!'

And sandy Barnstable rose up, wet with the salt sea  
    spray;  
And Bristol sent her answering shout down Narragansett  
    Bay!  
Along the broad Connecticut old Hampden felt the thrill,  
And the cheer of Hampshire's woodmen swept down from  
    Holyoke Hill.

The voice of Massachusetts! Of her free sons and  
    daughters,  
Deep calling unto deep aloud, the sound of many waters!  
Against the burden of that voice what tyrant power shall  
    stand?  
No fetters in the Bay State! No slave upon her land!

Look to it well, Virginians! In calmness we have borne,  
In answer to our faith and trust, your insult and your  
    scorn;  
You've spurned our kindest counsels; you've hunted for  
    our lives;  
And shaken round our hearths and homes your manacles  
    and gyves!

We wage no war, we lift no arm, we fling no torch within  
The fire-damps of the quaking mine beneath your soil of  
    sin;  
We leave ye with your bondmen, to wrestle, while ye can,  
With the strong upward tendencies and godlike soul of  
    man!

But for us and for our children, the vow which we have  
given

For freedom and humanity is registered in heaven;  
No slave-hunt in our borders,—no pirate on our strand!  
No fetters in the Bay State,—no slave upon our land!

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## BARCLAY OF URY

Up the streets of Aberdeen,  
By the kirk and college green,  
Rode the Laird of Ury;  
Close behind him, close beside,  
Foul of mouth and evil-eyed,  
Pressed the mob in fury.

Flouted him the drunken churl,  
Jeered at him the serving-girl,  
Prompt to please her master;  
And the begging carlin, late  
Fed and clothed at Ury's gate,  
Cursed him as he passed her.

Yet, with calm and stately mien,  
Up the streets of Aberdeen  
Came he slowly riding;  
And, to all he saw and heard,  
Answering not with bitter word,  
Turning not for chiding.

Came a troop with broadswords swinging,  
Bits and bridles sharply ringing,  
Loose and free and froward;  
Quoth the foremost, 'Ride him down!  
Push him! prick him! through the town  
Drive the Quaker coward!'

But from out the thickening crowd  
Cried a sudden voice and loud:  
'Barclay! Ho! a Barclay!'

And the old man at his side  
Saw a comrade, battle tried,  
    Scarred and sunburned darkly,

Who with ready weapon bare,  
Fronting to the troopers there,  
    Cried aloud: 'God save us,  
Call ye coward him who stood  
Ankle deep in Lützen's blood,  
    With the brave Gustavus?'

'Nay, I do not need thy sword,  
Comrade mine,' said Ury's lord.  
    'Put it up, I pray thee:  
Passive to his holy will,  
Trust I in my Master still,  
    Even though He slay me.

'Pledges of thy love and faith,  
Proved on many a field of death,  
    Not by me are needed.'  
Marvelled much that henchman bold,  
That his laird, so stout of old,  
    Now so meekly pleaded.

'Woe 's the day!' he sadly said,  
With a slowly shaking head,  
    And a look of pity;  
'Ury's honest lord reviled,  
Mock of knave and sport of child,  
    In his own good city!

'Speak the word, and, master mine,  
As we charged on Tilly's line,  
    And his Walloon lancers,  
Smiting through their midst we 'll teach  
Civil look and decent speech  
    To these boyish prancers!'

'Marvel not, mine ancient friend,  
Like beginning, like the end,'  
    Quoth the Laird of Ury;  
'Is the sinful servant more  
Than his gracious Lord who bore  
    Bonds and stripes in Jewry?

'Give me joy that in his name  
I can bear, with patient frame,  
    All these vain ones offer;  
While for them He suffereth long,  
Shall I answer wrong with wrong,  
    Scoffing with the scoffer?

'Happier I, with loss of all,  
Hunted, outlawed, held in thrall,  
    With few friends to greet me,  
Than when reeve and squire were seen,  
Riding out from Aberdeen,  
    With bared heads to meet me.

'When each goodwife, o'er and o'er,  
Blessed me as I passed her door;  
    And the snooded daughter,  
Through her casement glancing down,  
Smiled on him who bore renown  
    From red fields of slaughter.

'Hard to feel the stranger's scoff,  
Hard the old friend's falling off,  
    Hard to learn forgiving;  
But the Lord his own rewards,  
And his love with theirs accords,  
    Warm and fresh and living.

'Through this dark and stormy night  
Faith beholds a feeble light  
    Up the blackness streaking;  
Knowing God's own time is best,  
In a patient hope I rest  
    For the full day-breaking!'

So the Laird of Ury said,  
Turning slow his horse's head  
Towards the Tolbooth prison,  
Where, through iron gates, he heard  
Poor disciples of the Word  
Preach of Christ arisen!

Not in vain, Confessor old,  
Unto us the tale is told  
Of thy day of trial;  
Every age on him who strays  
From its broad and beaten ways  
Pours its seven-fold vial.

Happy he whose inward ear  
Angel comfortings can hear,  
O'er the rabble's laughter;  
And while Hatred's fagots burn,  
Glimpses through the smoke discern  
Of the good hereafter.

Knowing this, that never yet  
Share of Truth was vainly set  
In the world's wide fallow;  
After hands shall sow the seed,  
After hands from hill and mead  
Reap the harvests yellow.

Thus, with somewhat of the Seer,  
Must the moral pioneer  
From the Future borrow;  
Clothe the waste with dreams of grain,  
And, on midnight's sky of rain,  
Paint the golden morrow!

MAUD MULLER on a summer's day  
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth  
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee  
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,  
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest  
And a nameless longing filled her breast,—

A wish that she hardly dared to own,  
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,  
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade  
Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And asked a draught from the spring that flowed  
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up,  
And filled for him her small tin cup,

And blushed as she gave it, looking down  
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown. .

'Thanks!' said the Judge; 'a sweeter draught  
From a fairer hand was never quaffed.'

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,  
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered whether  
The cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,  
And her graceful ankles bare and brown;

And listened, while a pleased surprise  
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay  
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked and sighed: 'Ah me!  
That I the Judge's bride might be!

'He would dress me up in silks so fine,  
And praise and toast me at his wine.

'My father should wear a broadcloth coat;  
My brother should sail a painted boat.

'I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,  
And the baby should have a new toy each day.

'And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,  
And all should bless me who left our door.'

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,  
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

'A form more fair, a face more sweet,  
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

'And her modest answer and graceful air  
Show her wise and good as she is fair.

'Would she were mine, and I to-day,  
Like her, a harvester of hay;

'No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,  
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

'But low of cattle and song of birds,  
And health and quiet and loving words.'

But he thought of his sisters, proud and cold,  
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,  
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,  
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well  
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,  
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,  
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes  
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,  
He longed for the wayside well instead;

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms  
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain,  
'Ah, that I were free again!

'Free as when I rode that day,  
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay.'

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,  
And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain,  
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot  
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring brook fall  
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again  
She saw a rider draw his rein;



And, gazing down with timid grace,  
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls  
Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinnet turned,  
The tallow candle an astral burned,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,  
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,  
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,  
Saying only, 'It might have been.'

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,  
For rich repiner and household drudge!

*yet*  
{ God pity them both! and pity us all,  
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

{ For of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these: 'It might have been!'

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies  
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And, in the hereafter, angels may  
Roll the stone from its grave away!

## THE BAREFOOT BOY

BLESSINGS on thee, little man,  
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!  
With thy turned-up pantaloons,  
And thy merry whistled tunes;

With thy red lip, redder still  
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;  
With the sunshine on thy face,  
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;  
From my heart I give thee joy,—  
I was once a barefoot boy!  
Prince thou art,—the grown-up man  
Only is republican.  
Let the million-dollared ride!  
Barefoot, trudging at his side,  
Thou hast more than he can buy  
In the reach of ear and eye,—  
Outward sunshine, inward joy:  
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's painless play,  
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,  
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,  
Knowledge never learned of schools,  
Of the wild bee's morning chase,  
Of the wild-flower's time and place,  
Flight of fowl and habitude  
Of the tenants of the wood;  
How the tortoise bears his shell,  
How the woodchuck digs his cell,  
And the ground-mole sinks his well;  
How the robin feeds her young,  
How the oriole's nest is hung;  
Where the whitest lilies blow,  
Where the freshest berries grow,  
Where the ground-nut trails its vine,  
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;  
Of the black wasp's cunning way,  
Mason of his walls of clay,  
And the architectural plans  
Of gray hornet artisans!  
For, eschewing books and tasks,  
Nature answers all he asks;  
Hand in hand with her he walks,  
Face to face with her he talks,

Part and parcel of her joy,—  
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's time of June,  
Crowding years in one brief moon,  
When all things I heard or saw,  
Me, their master, waited for.  
I was rich in flowers and trees,  
Humming-birds and honey-bees;  
For my sport the squirrel played,  
Plied the snouted mole his spade;  
For my taste the blackberry cone  
Purpled over hedge and stone;  
Laughed the brook for my delight  
Through the day and through the night,  
Whispering at the garden wall,  
Talked with me from fall to fall;  
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,  
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,  
Mine, on bending orchard trees,  
Apples of Hesperides!  
Still as my horizon grew,  
Larger grew my riches too;  
All the world I saw or knew  
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,  
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

Oh for festal dainties spread,  
Like my bowl of milk and bread;  
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,  
On the door-stone, gray and rude!  
O'er me, like a regal tent,  
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,  
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,  
Looped in many a wind-swung fold;  
While for music came the play  
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;  
And, to light the noisy choir,  
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.

I was monarch: pomp and joy  
 Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,  
 Live and laugh, as boyhood can!  
 Though the flinty slopes be hard,  
 Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,  
 Every morn shall lead thee through  
 Fresh baptisms of the dew;  
 Every evening from thy feet  
 Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:  
 All too soon these feet must hide  
 In the prison cells of pride,  
 Lose the freedom of the sod,  
 Like a colt's for work be shod,  
 Made to tread the mills of toil,  
 Up and down in ceaseless moil:  
 Happy if their track be found  
 Never on forbidden ground;  
 Happy if they sink not in  
 Quick and treacherous sands of sin.  
 Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,  
 Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

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## SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE

OF all the rides since the birth of time,  
 Told in story or sung in rhyme,—  
 On Apuleius's Golden Ass,  
 Or one-eyed Calender's horse of brass,  
 Witch astride of a human back,  
 Islam's prophet on Al-Borák,—  
 The strangest ride that ever was sped  
 Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!  
     Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
     Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
     By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of owl,  
 Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,

Feathered and ruffled in every part,  
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.  
Scores of women, old and young,  
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,  
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,  
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:  
    ‘Here ’s Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
    Torr’d an’ futherr’d an’ corr’d in a corrt  
    By the women o’ Morble’ead!’

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,  
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,  
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase  
Bacchus round some antique vase,  
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,  
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,  
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns’ twang,  
Over and over the Mænads sang:  
    ‘Here ’s Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
    Torr’d an’ futherr’d an’ corr’d in a corrt  
    By the women o’ Morble’ead!’

Small pity for him!—He sailed away  
From a leaking ship in Chaleur Bay,—  
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,  
With his own town’s-people on her deck!  
‘Lay by! lay by!’ they called to him.  
Back he answered, ‘Sink or swim!  
Brag of your catch of fish again!’  
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!  
    Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
    Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
    By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur  
That wreck shall lie forevermore.  
Mother and sister, wife and maid,  
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead  
Over the moaning and rainy sea,—  
Looked for the coming that might not be!

What did the winds and the sea-birds say  
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?—  
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

Through the street, on either side,  
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;  
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,  
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.  
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,  
Hulks of old sailors run aground,  
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,  
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:  
'Here 's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead!'

Sweetly along the Salem road  
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.  
Little the wicked skipper knew  
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.  
Riding there in his sorry trim,  
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,  
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear  
Of voices shouting, far and near:  
'Here 's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead!'

'Hear me, neighbors!' at last he cried,—  
'What to me is this noisy ride?  
What is the shame that clothes the skin  
To the nameless horror that lives within?  
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,  
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!  
Hate me and curse me,—I only dread  
The hand of God and the face of the dead!'  
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea  
 Said, 'God has touched him! why should we!'   
 Said an old wife mourning her only son,  
 'Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!'   
 So with soft relentings and rude excuse,  
 Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,  
 And gave him a cloak to hide him in,  
 And left him alone with his shame and sin.  
 Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
 Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
 By the women of Marblehead!

799

## THE PIPES AT LUCKNOW

PIPES of the misty moorlands,  
 Voice of the glens and hills;  
 The droning of the torrents,  
 The treble of the rills!  
 Not the braes of bloom and heather,  
 Nor the mountains dark with rain,  
 Nor maiden bower, nor border tower,  
 Have heard your sweetest strain!

Dear to the Lowland reaper,  
 And plaided mountaineer,—  
 To the cottage and the castle  
 The Scottish pipes are dear;—  
 Sweet sounds the ancient pibroch  
 O'er mountain, loch, and glade;  
 But the sweetest of all music  
 The pipes at Lucknow played.

Day by day the Indian tiger  
 Louder yelled, and nearer crept;  
 Round and round the jungle-serpent  
 Near and nearer circles swept.  
 'Pray for rescue, wives and mothers,—  
 Pray to-day!' the soldier said;  
 'To-morrow, death's between us  
 And the wrong and shame we dread.'

(O) HC XLII

Oh, they listened, looked, and waited,  
Till their hope became despair;  
And the sobs of low bewailing  
Filled the pauses of their prayer.  
Then up spake a Scottish maiden,  
With her ear unto the ground:  
'Dinna ye hear it?—dinna ye hear it?  
The pipes o' Havelock sound!'

Hushed the wounded man his groaning;  
Hushed the wife her little ones;  
Alone they heard the drum-roll  
And the roar of Sepoy guns.  
But to sounds of home and childhood  
The Highland ear was true;—  
As her mother's cradle-crooning  
The mountain pipes she knew.

Like the march of soundless music  
Through the vision of the seer,  
More of feeling than of hearing,  
Of the heart than of the ear,  
She knew the droning pibroch,  
She knew the Campbell's call:  
'Hark! hear ye no MacGregor's,  
The grandest o' them all!'

Oh, they listened, dumb and breathless,  
And they caught the sound at last;  
Faint and far beyond the Goomtee  
Rose and fell the piper's blast!  
Then a burst of wild thanksgiving  
Mingled woman's voice and man's;  
'God be praised!—the march of Havelock!  
The piping of the clans!'

Louder, nearer, fierce as vengeance,  
Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,  
Came the wild MacGregor's clan-call,  
Stinging all the air to life.



But when the far-off dust-cloud  
To plaided legions grew,  
Full tenderly and blithesomely  
The pipes of rescue blew!

Round the silver domes of Lucknow,  
Moslem mosque and Pagan shrine,  
Breathed the air to Britons dearest,  
The air of Auld Lang Syne.  
O'er the cruel roll of war-drums  
Rose that sweet and homelike strain;  
And the tartan clove the turban,  
As the Goomtee cleaves the plain.

Dear to the corn-land reaper  
And plaided mountaineer,—  
To the cottage and the castle  
The piper's song is dear.  
Sweet sounds the Gaelic pibroch  
O'er mountain, glen, and glade;  
But the sweetest of all music  
The Pipes at Lucknow played!

800

BARBARA FRIETCHIE

UP from the meadows rich with corn,  
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand  
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,  
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as the garden of the Lord  
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall  
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall;

Over the mountains winding down,  
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,  
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun  
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,  
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,  
She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic window the staff she set,  
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,  
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right  
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.

‘Halt!’—the dust-brown ranks stood fast.  
‘Fire!’—out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;  
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff  
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window-sill,  
And shook it forth with a royal will.

‘Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,  
But spare your country’s flag,’ she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,  
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred  
To life at that woman's deed and word;

'Who touches a hair of yon gray head  
Dies like a dog! March on!' he said.

All day long through Frederick street  
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tost  
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell  
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light  
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,  
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear  
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,  
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw  
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down  
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

## OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

[1809-1894]

801

## THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS

THIS is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,  
Sails the unshadowed main,—  
The venturous bark that flings  
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings  
In gulfs enchanted, where the siren sings,  
And coral reefs lie bare,  
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;  
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!  
And every chambered cell,  
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,  
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,  
Before thee lies revealed,—  
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil  
That spread his lustrous coil;  
Still, as the spiral grew,  
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,  
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,  
Built up its idle door,  
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,  
Child of the wandering sea,  
Cast from her lap, forlorn!  
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born  
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!  
While on mine ear it rings,  
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

802

OLD IRONSIDES<sup>1</sup>

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!  
Long has it waved on high,  
And many an eye has danced to see  
That banner in the sky;  
Beneath it rung the battle shout,  
And burst the cannon's roar;—  
The meteor of the ocean air  
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

Her deck once red with heroes' blood,  
Where knelt the vanquished foe,  
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood  
And waves were white below,  
No more shall feel the victor's tread,  
Or know the conquered knee;—  
The harpies of the shore shall pluck  
The eagle of the sea!

Oh, better that her shattered hulk  
Should sink beneath the wave;  
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,  
And there should be her grave:  
Nail to the mast her holy flag,  
Set every threadbare sail,  
And give her to the god of storms,  
The lightning and the gale!

<sup>1</sup>This was the popular name by which the frigate "Constitution" was known.

803

## THE LAST LEAF

I SAW him once before,  
As he passed by the door;  
    And again  
The pavement stones resound,  
As he totters o'er the ground  
    With his cane.

They say that in his prime,  
Ere the pruning-knife of Time  
    Cut him down,  
Not a better man was found  
By the Crier on his round  
    Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,  
And he looks at all he meets  
    Sad and wan;  
And shakes his feeble head,  
That it seems as if he said,  
    " They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest  
On the lips that he has prest  
    In their bloom;  
And the names he loved to hear  
Have been carved for many a year  
    On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said—  
Poor old lady, she is dead  
    Long ago—  
That he had a Roman nose,  
And his cheek was like a rose  
    In the snow.

But now his nose is thin,  
And it rests upon his chin  
    Like a staff;

And a crook is in his back,  
 And a melancholy crack  
     In his laugh.

I know it is a sin  
 For me to sit and grin  
     At him here;  
 But the old three-cornered hat,  
 And the breeches and all that,  
     Are so queer!

And if I should live to be  
 The last leaf upon the tree  
     In the spring,  
 Let them smile, as I do now,  
 At the old forsaken bough  
     Where I cling.

804

## CONTENTMENT

‘Man wants but little here below.’

LITTLE I ask; my wants are few;  
 I only wish a hut of stone  
 (A *very plain* brown stone will do)  
 That I may call my own;—  
 And close at hand is such a one,  
 In yonder street that fronts the sun.

Plain food is quite enough for me;  
 Three courses are as good as ten;—  
 If Nature can subsist on three,  
 Thank Heaven for three. Amen!  
 I always thought cold victual nice;—  
 My *choice* would be vanilla-ice.

I care not much for gold or land;—  
 Give me a mortgage here and there,—  
 Some good bank-stock, some note of hand,  
 Or trifling railroad share,—

I only ask that Fortune send  
A *little* more than I shall spend.

Honors are silly toys, I know,  
And titles are but empty names;  
I would, *perhaps*, be Plenipo,—  
But only near St. James;  
I 'm very sure I should not care  
To fill our Gubernator's chair.

Jewels are baubles; 't is a sin  
To care for such unfruitful things;—  
One good-sized diamond in a pin,—  
Some, *not so large*, in rings,—  
A ruby, and a pearl, or so,  
Will do for me;—I laugh at show.

My dame should dress in cheap attire  
(Good, heavy silks are never dear);—  
I own perhaps I *might* desire  
Some shawls of true Cashmere,—  
Some marrowy crapes of China silk,  
Like wrinkled skins on scalded milk.

I would not have the horse I drive  
So fast that folks must stop and stare;  
An easy gait—two forty-five—  
Suits me; I do not care;—  
Perhaps, for just a *single spurt*,  
Some seconds less would do no hurt.

Of pictures, I should like to own  
Titians and Raphaels three or four,—  
I love so much their style and tone,  
One Turner, and no more  
(A landscape,—foreground golden dirt,—  
The sunshine painted with a squirt).



Of books but few,—some fifty score  
 For daily use, and bound for wear;  
 The rest upon an upper floor;—  
     Some *little* luxury *there*  
 Of red morocco's gilded gleam  
 And vellum rich as country cream.

Busts, cameos, gems,—such things as these,  
 Which others often show for pride,  
*I* value for their power to please,  
 And selfish churls deride;—  
*One* Stradivarius, I confess,  
*Two* Meerschaums, I would fain possess.

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,  
 Nor ape the glittering upstart fool;—  
 Shall not carved tables serve my turn,  
 But *all* must be of buhl?  
 Give grasping pomp its double share,—  
 I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Thus humble let me live and die,  
 Nor long for Midas' golden touch;  
 If Heaven more generous gifts deny,  
 I shall not miss them *much*,—  
 Too grateful for the blessing lent  
 Of simple tastes and mind content!

## JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

[1819-1891]

805

## THE PRESENT CRISIS

WHEN a deed is done for Freedom, through the broad earth's  
     aching breast  
 Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling on from east to west,  
 And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels the soul within him  
     climb

To the awful verge of manhood, as the energy sublime  
Of a century bursts full-blossomed on the thorny stem of  
Time.

Through the walls of hut and palace shoots the instantaneous  
throe,  
When the travail of the Ages wrings earth's systems to and  
fro;  
At the birth of each new Era, with a recognizing start,  
Nation wildly looks at nation, standing with mute lips apart,  
And glad Truth's yet mightier man-child leaps beneath the  
Future's heart.

So the Evil's triumph sendeth, with a terror and a chill,  
Under continent to continent, the sense of coming ill,  
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels his sympathies with  
God  
In hot tear-drops ebbing earthward, to be drunk up by  
the sod,  
Till a corpse crawls round unburied, delving in the nobler  
clod.

For mankind are one in spirit, and an instinct bears along,  
Round the earth's electric circle, the swift flash of right or  
wrong;  
Whether conscious or unconscious, yet Humanity's vast  
frame  
Through its ocean-sundered fibres feels the gush of joy or  
shame;—  
In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim.

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil  
side;

Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the  
bloom or blight,  
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the  
right,  
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that  
light.

Hast thou chosen, O my people, on whose party thou shalt  
stand,  
Ere the Doom from its worn sandals shakes the dust against  
our land?  
Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet 't is Truth alone is  
strong,  
And, albeit she wander outcast now, I see around her throng  
Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to enshield her from all  
wrong.

Backward look across the ages and the beacon-moments see,  
That, like peaks of some sunk continent, jut through Obliv-  
ion's sea;  
Not an ear in court or market for the low foreboding cry  
Of those Crises, God's stern winnowers, from whose feet  
earth's chaff must fly;  
Never shows the choice momentous till the judgment hath  
passed by.

Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record  
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the  
Word;  
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the  
throne,—  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim  
unknown,  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

We see dimly in the Present what is small and what is great,  
Slow of faith how weak an arm may turn the iron helm of  
fate,  
But the soul is still oracular; amid the market's din,  
List the ominous stern whisper from the Delphic cave  
within,—  
'They enslave their children's children who make compromise  
with sin.'

Slavery, the earth-born Cyclops, fellest of the giant brood,  
Sons of brutish Force and Darkness, who have drenched  
the earth with blood,

Famished in his self-made desert, blinded by our purer day,  
Gropes in yet unblasted regions for his miserable prey;—  
Shall we guide his gory fingers where our helpless children  
play?

Then to side with Truth is noble when we share her wretched  
crust,  
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 't is prosperous  
to be just;  
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands  
aside,  
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,  
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they had denied.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes,—they were souls that  
stood alone,  
While the men they agonized for hurled the contumelious stone,  
Stood serene, and down the future saw the golden beam  
incline  
To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,  
By one man's plain truth to manhood and to God's supreme  
design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I track,  
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not  
back,  
And these mounts of anguish number how each generation  
learned  
One new word of that grand *Credo* which in prophet-hearts  
hath burned  
Since the first man stood God-conquered with his face to  
heaven upturned.

For Humanity sweeps onward: where to-day the martyr  
stands,  
On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;  
Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots  
burn,  
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return  
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn.

'T is as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves  
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our father's graves,  
Worshippers of light ancestral make the present light a  
crime;—

Was the Mayflower launched by cowards, steered by men  
behind their time?

Turn those tracks toward Past or Future, that make Ply-  
mouth Rock sublime?

They were men of present valor, stalwart old iconoclasts,  
Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue was the  
Past's;

But we make their truth our falsehood, thinking that hath  
made us free,

Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while our tender spirits  
flee

The rude grasp of that great Impulse which drove them  
across the sea.

They have rights who dare maintain them; we are traitors  
to our sires,

Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's new-lit altar-  
fires;

Shall we make their creed our jailer? Shall we, in our  
haste to slay,

From the tombs of the old prophets steal the funeral lamps  
away

To light up the martyr-fagots round the prophets of to-day?

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good  
uncouth;

They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast  
of Truth;

Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must  
Pilgrims be,

Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the des-  
perate winter sea,

Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted  
key.

## THE PIOUS EDITOR'S CREED

I du believe in Freedom's cause,  
Ez fur away ez Payris is;  
I love to see her stick her claws  
In them infarnal Phayrisees;  
It 's wal enough agin a king  
To dror resolves an' triggers,—  
But libbaty 's a kind o' thing  
Thet don't agree with niggers.

I du believe the people want  
A tax on teas an' coffees,  
Thet nothin' aint extravygunt,—  
Purvidin' I 'm in office;  
Fer I hev loved my country sence  
My eye-teeth filled their sockets,  
An' Uncle Sam I reverence,  
Partic'larly his pockets.

I du believe in *any* plan  
O' levyin' the taxes,  
Ez long ez, like a lumberman,  
I git jest wut I axes;  
I go free-trade thru thick an' thin,  
Because it kind o' rouses  
The folks to vote,—an' keeps us in  
Our quiet custom-houses.

I du believe it 's wise an' good  
To sen' out furrin missions,  
Thet is, on sartin understood  
An' orthydox conditions;—  
I mean nine thousan' dolls. per ann.,  
Nine thousan' more fer outfit,  
An' me to recommend a man  
The place 'ould jest about fit.

I du believe in special ways  
O' prayin' an' convartin';  
The bread comes back in many days,  
An' buttered, tu, fer sartin;  
I mean in preyin' till one busts  
On wut the party chooses,  
An' in convartin' public trusts  
To very privit uses.

I du believe hard coin the stuff  
Fer 'lectioneers to spout on;  
The people 's ollers soft enough  
To make hard money out on;  
Dear Uncle Sam pervides fer his,  
An' gives a good-sized junk to all,—  
I don't care *how* hard money is,  
Ez long ez mine 's paid punctooal.

I du believe with all my soul  
In the gret Press's freedom,  
To pint the people to the goal  
An' in the traces lead 'em;  
Palsied the arm thet forges yokes  
At my fat contracts squintin',  
An' withered be the nose thet pokes  
Inter the gov'ment printin'!

I du believe thet I should give  
Wut 's his'n unto Cæsar,  
Fer it 's by him I move an' live,  
Frum him my bread an' cheese air;  
I du believe thet all o' me  
Doth bear his superscription,—  
Will, conscience, honor, honesty,  
An' things o' thet description.

I du believe in prayer an' praise  
To him thet hez the grantin'  
O' jobs,—in every thin' thet pays,  
But most of all in CANTIN';

This doth my cup with marcies fill,  
This lays all thought o' sin to rest,  
I *don't* believe in princerple,  
But oh, I *du* in interest.

I du believe in bein' this  
Or thet, ez it may happen  
One way or 't other hendiest is  
To ketch the people nappin';  
It aint by princerples nor men  
My preudunt course is steadied,—  
I scent wich pays the best, an' then  
Go into it baldheaded.

I du believe thet holdin' slaves  
Comes nat'ral to a Presidunt,  
Let 'lone the rowdedow it saves  
To hev a wal-broke precedunt;  
Fer any office, small or gret,  
I could n't ax with no face,  
'uthout I 'd ben, thru dry an' wet,  
Th' unrizzest kind o' doughface.

I du believe wutever trash  
'll keep the people in blindness,  
Thet we the Mexicuns can thrash  
Right inter brotherly kindness,  
Thet bombshells, grape, an' powder 'n' ball  
Air good-will's strongest magnets,  
Thet peace, to make it stick at all,  
Must be druv in with bagnets.

In short, I firmly du believe  
In Humbug generally,  
Fer it 's a thing thet I perceive  
To hev a solid vally;  
This heth my faithful shepherd ben,  
In pasturs sweet heth led me,  
An' this 'll keep the people green  
To feed ez they hev fed me.



807

## THE COURTIN'

God makes sech nights, all white an' still  
Fur 'z you can look or listen,  
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,  
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown  
An' peeked in thru' the winder,  
An' there sot Huldy all alone,  
'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side  
With half a cord o' wood in—  
There war n't no stoves (tell comfort died)  
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out  
Towards the pootiest, bless her,  
An' leetle flames danced all about  
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,  
An' in amongst 'em rusted  
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young  
Fetched back f'om Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,  
Seemed warm f'om floor to ceilin',  
An' she looked full ez rosy agin  
Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'T was kin' o' kingdom-come to look  
On sech a blessed cretur,  
A dogrose blushin' to a brook  
Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,  
Clear grit an' human natur',  
None could n't quicker pitch a ton  
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He 'd sparked it with full twenty gals,  
Hed squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,  
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—  
All is, he could n't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run  
All crinkly like curled maple,  
The side she breshed felt full o' sun  
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing  
Ez hisn in the choir;  
My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,  
She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she 'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,  
When her new meetin'-bunnet  
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair  
O' blue eyes sot upun it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*  
She seemed to 've got a new soul,  
For she felt sartin-sure he 'd come,  
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,  
A-raspin' on the scraper,—  
All ways to once her feelins flew  
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,  
Some doubtfe o' the sekle,  
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,  
But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk  
Ez though she wished him funder,  
An' on her apples kep' to work,  
Parin' away like murder.

'You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?'  
'Wal . . . no . . . I come dasignin'—  
'To see my Ma? She 's sprinklin' clo'es  
Agin to-morrow's i'nin'.

To say why gals acts so or so,  
Or don't, 'ould be persumin';  
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*  
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,  
Then stood a spell on t'other,  
An' on which one he felt the wust  
He could n't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, 'I'd better call agin';  
Says she, 'Think likely, Mister:'  
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,  
An' . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,  
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,  
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips  
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind  
Whose naturs never vary,  
Like streams that keep a summer mind  
Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued  
Too tight for all expressin',  
Tell mother see how metters stood,  
An' gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide  
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,  
An' all I know is they was cried  
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

## 808 ODE RECITED AT THE HARVARD COMMEMORATION

*July 21, 1865*

## I

WEAK-WINGED is song,  
Nor aims at that clear-ethered height  
Whither the brave deed climbs for light:  
We seem to do them wrong,  
Bringing our robin's-leaf to deck their hearse  
Who in warm life-blood wrote their nobler verse,  
Our trivial song to honor those who come  
With ears attuned to strenuous trump and drum,  
And shaped in squadron-strophes their desire,  
Live battle-odes whose lines were steel and fire:  
Yet sometimes feathered words are strong,  
A gracious memory to buoy up and save  
From Lethe's dreamless ooze, the common grave  
Of the unventurous throng.

## II

To-day our Reverend Mother welcomes back  
Her wisest Scholars, those who understood  
The deeper teaching of her mystic tome,  
And offered their fresh lives to make it good:  
No lore of Greece or Rome,  
No science peddling with the names of things,  
Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,  
Can lift our life with wings  
Far from Death's idle gulf that for the many waits,  
And lengthen out our dates  
With that clear fame whose memory sings  
In manly hearts to come, and nerves them and dilates:  
Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us all!  
Not such the trumpet-call  
Of thy diviner mood,  
That could thy sons entice  
From happy homes and toils, the fruitful nest  
Of those half-virtues which the world calls best,

Into War's tumult rude;  
But rather far that stern device  
The sponsors chose that round thy cradle stood  
In the dim, unventured wood,  
The VERITAS<sup>1</sup> that lurks beneath  
The letter's unprolific sheath,  
Life of whate'er makes life worth living,  
Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal food,  
One heavenly thing whereof earth hath the giving.

## III

Many loved Truth, and lavished life's best oil  
Amid the dust of books to find her,  
Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,  
With the cast mantle she hath left behind her.  
Many in sad faith sought for her,  
Many with crossed hands sighed for her;  
But these, our brothers, fought for her,  
At life's dear peril wrought for her,  
So loved her that they died for her,  
Tasting the raptured fleetness  
Of her divine completeness:  
Their higher instinct knew  
Those love her best who to themselves are true,  
And what they dare to dream of, dare to do;  
They followed her and found her  
Where all may hope to find,  
Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,  
But beautiful, with danger's sweetness round her.  
Where faith made whole with deed  
Breathes its awakening breath  
Into the lifeless creed,  
They saw her plumed and mailed,  
With sweet, stern face unveiled,  
And all-repaying eyes, look proud on them in death.

<sup>1</sup> Veritas, the motto on the seal of Harvard University, inscribed upon three open books.

## IV

Our slender life runs rippling by, and glides  
Into the silent hollow of the past;  
What is there that abides  
To make the next age better for the last?  
Is earth too poor to give us  
Something to live for here that shall outlive us?  
Some more substantial boon  
Than such as flows and ebbs with Fortune's fickle moon?  
The little that we see  
From doubt is never free;  
The little that we do  
Is but half-nobly true;  
With our laborious hiving  
What men call treasure, and the gods call dross,  
Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving,  
Only secure in every one's conniving,  
A long account of nothings paid with loss,  
Where we poor puppets, jerked by unseen wires,  
After our little hour of strut and rave,  
With all our pasteboard passions and desires,  
Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal fires,  
Are tossed pell-mell together in the grave.  
But stay! no age was e'er degenerate,  
Unless men held it at too cheap a rate,  
For in our likeness still we shape our fate.  
Ah, there is something here  
Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer,  
Something that gives our feeble light  
A high immunity from Night,  
Something that leaps life's narrow bars  
To claim its birthright with the hosts of heaven;  
A seed of sunshine that can leaven  
Our earthly dullness with the beams of stars,  
And glorify our clay  
With light from fountains elder than the Day;  
A conscience more divine than we,  
A gladness fed with secret tears,

A vexing, forward-reaching sense  
Of some more noble permanence;  
A light across the sea,  
Which haunts the soul and will not let it be,  
Still beaconing from the heights of undegenerate years.

## v

Whither leads the path  
To ampler fates that leads?  
Not down through flowery meads,  
To reap an aftermath  
Of youth's vainglorious weeds,  
But up the steep, amid the wrath  
And shock of deadly-hostile creeds,  
Where the world's best hope and stay  
By battle's flashes gropes a desperate way,  
And every turf the fierce foot clings to bleeds.  
Peace hath her not ignoble wreath,  
Ere yet the sharp, decisive word  
Light the black lips of cannon, and the sword  
Dreams in its easeful sheath;  
But some day the live coal behind the thought,  
Whether from Baäl's stone obscene,  
Or from the shrine serene  
Of God's pure altar brought,  
Bursts up in flame; the war of tongue and pen  
Learns with what deadly purpose it was fraught,  
And, helpless in the fiery passion caught,  
Shakes all the pillared state with shock of men:  
Some day the soft Ideal that we wooed  
Confronts us fiercely, foe-beset, pursued,  
And cries reproachful: 'Was it, then, my praise,  
And not myself was loved? Prove now thy truth;  
I claim of thee the promise of thy youth;  
Give me thy life, or cower in empty phrase,  
The victim of thy genius, not its mate!'  
Life may be given in many ways,  
And loyalty to Truth be sealed  
As bravely in the closet as the field,

So bountiful is Fate;  
But then to stand beside her,  
When craven churls deride her,  
To front a lie in arms and not to yield,  
This shows, methinks, God's plan  
And measure of a stalwart man,  
Limbed like the old heroic breeds,  
Who stands self-poised on manhood's solid earth,  
Not forced to frame excuses for his birth,  
Fed from within with all the strength he needs.

## VI

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,  
Whom late the Nation he had led,  
With ashes on her head,  
Wept with the passion of an angry grief:  
Forgive me, if from present things I turn  
To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,  
And hang my wreath on his world-honored urn.  
Nature, they say, doth dote,  
And cannot make a man  
Save on some worn-out plan,  
Repeating us by rote:  
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,  
And choosing sweet clay from the breast  
Of the unexhausted West,  
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,  
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.  
How beautiful to see  
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,  
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;  
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,  
Not lured by any cheat of birth,  
But by his clear-grained human worth,  
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!  
They knew that outward grace is dust;  
They could not choose but trust  
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,  
And supple-tempered will



That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.  
His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,  
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,  
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;  
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,  
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,  
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest stars.

Nothing of Europe here,  
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,  
Ere any names of Serf and Peer  
Could Nature's equal scheme deface  
And thwart her genial will;  
Here was a type of the true elder race,  
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.  
I praise him not; it were too late;  
And some innative weakness there must be  
In him who condescends to victory  
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,  
Safe in himself as in a fate.

So always firmly he:  
He knew to bide his time,  
And can his fame abide,  
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,  
Till the wise years decide.  
Great captains, with their guns and drums,  
Disturb our judgment for the hour,  
But at last silence comes;  
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,  
Our children shall behold his fame.

The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,  
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,  
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

## VII

Long as man's hope insatiate can discern  
Or only guess some more inspiring goal  
Outside of Self, enduring as the pole,  
Along whose course the flying axles burn  
Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's manlier brood;

Long as below we cannot find  
 The meed that stills the inexorable mind;  
 So long this faith to some ideal Good,  
 Under whatever mortal names it masks,  
 Freedom, Law, Country, this ethereal mood  
 That thanks the Fates for their severer tasks,  
 Feeling its challenged pulses leap,  
 While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,  
 And, set in Danger's van, has all the boon it asks,  
 Shall win man's praise and woman's love,  
 Shall be a wisdom that we set above  
 All other skills and gifts to culture dear,  
 A virtue round whose forehead we inwreath  
 Laurels that with a living passion breathe  
 When other crowns grow, while we twine them, sear.  
 What brings us thronging these high rites to pay,  
 And seal these hours the noblest of our year,  
 Save that our brothers found this better way?

## VIII

We sit here in the Promised Land  
 That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;  
 But 'twas they won it, sword in hand,  
 Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk.  
 We welcome back our bravest and our best;—  
 Ah me! not all! some come not with the rest,  
 Who went forth brave and bright as any here!  
 I strive to mix some gladness with my strain,  
     But the sad strings complain,  
     And will not please the ear:  
 I sweep them for a pæan, but they wane  
     Again and yet again  
 Into a dirge, and die away, in pain.  
 In these brave ranks I only see the gaps,  
 Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb turf wraps,  
 Dark to the triumph which they died to gain:  
     Fitlier may others greet the living,  
     For me the past is unforgiving;

I with uncovered head  
Salute the sacred dead,  
Who went, and who return not.—Say not so!  
'Tis not the grapes of Canaan that repay,  
But the high faith that failed not by the way;  
Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave;  
No ban of endless night exiles the brave;  
And to the saner mind  
We rather seem the dead that stayed behind.  
Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow!  
For never shall their aureoled presence lack:  
I see them muster in a gleaming row,  
With ever-youthful brows that nobler show;  
We find in our dull road their shining track;  
In every nobler mood  
We feel the orient of their spirit glow,  
Part of our life's unalterable good,  
Of all our saintlier aspiration;  
They come transfigured back,  
Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,  
Beautiful evermore, and with the rays  
Of morn on their white Shields of Expectation!

## IX

But is there hope to save  
Even this ethereal essence from the grave?  
What ever 'scaped Oblivion's subtle wrong  
Save a few clarion names, or golden threads of song?  
Before my musing eye  
The mighty ones of old sweep by,  
Disvoicèd now and insubstantial things,  
As noisy once as we; poor ghosts of kings,  
Shadows of empire wholly gone to dust,  
And many races, nameless long ago,  
To darkness driven by that imperious gust  
Of ever-rushing Time that here doth blow:  
O visionary world, condition strange,  
Where naught abiding is but only Change,

Where the deep-bolted stars themselves still shift and  
range!

Shall we to more continuance make pretence?  
Renown builds tombs; a life-estate is Wit;

And, bit by bit,

The cunning years steal all from us but woe;  
Leaves are we, whose decays no harvest sow.

But, when we vanish hence,

Shall they lie forceless in the dark below,

Save to make green their little length of sods,

Or deepen pansies for a year or two,

Who now to us are shining-sweet as gods?

Was dying all they had the skill to do?

That were not fruitless; but the Soul resents

Such short-lived service, as if blind events

Ruled without her, or earth could so endure;

She claims a more divine investiture

Of longer tenure than Fame's airy rents;

Whate'er she touches doth her nature share;

Her inspiration haunts the ennobled air,

Gives eyes to mountains blind,

Ears to the deaf earth, voices to the wind,

And her clear trump sings succor everywhere

By lonely bivouacs to the wakeful mind;

For soul inherits all that soul could dare:

Yea, Manhood hath a wider span

And larger privilege of life than man.

The single deed, the private sacrifice,

So radiant now through proudly-hidden tears,

Is covered up erelong from mortal eyes

With thoughtless drift of the deciduous years;

But that high privilege that makes all men peers,

That leap of heart whereby a people rise

Up to a noble anger's height,

And, flamed on by the Fates, not shrink, but grow more  
bright,

That swift validity in noble veins,

Of choosing danger and disdaining shame,

Of being set on flame

By the pure fire that flies all contact base

But wraps its chosen with angelic might,  
    These are imperishable gains,  
    Sure as the sun, medicinal as light,  
    These hold great futures in their lusty reins  
And certify to earth a new imperial race.

## X

Who now shall sneer?  
Who dare again to say we trace  
Our lines to a plebeian race?  
    Roundhead and Cavalier!  
Dumb are those names erewhile in battle loud;  
Dream-footed as the shadow of a cloud,  
    They flit across the ear:  
That is best blood that hath most iron in 't,  
To edge resolve with, pouring without stint  
    For what makes manhood dear.  
Tell us not of Plantagenets,  
Hapsburgs, and Guelfs, whose thin bloods crawl  
Down from some victor in a border-brawl!  
    How poor their outworn coronets,  
Matched with one leaf of that plain civic wreath  
Our brave for honor's blazon shall bequeath,  
    Through whose desert a rescued Nation sets  
Her heel on treason, and the trumpet hears  
Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen ears  
    With vain resentments and more vain regrets!

## XI

Not in anger, not in pride,  
Pure from passion's mixture rude  
Ever to base earth allied,  
But with far-heard gratitude,  
Still with heart and voice renewed,  
To heroes living and dear martyrs dead,  
The strain should close that consecrates our brave.  
Lift the heart and lift the head!

Lofty be its mood and grave,  
Not without a martial ring,  
Not without a prouder tread  
And a peal of exultation:  
Little right has he to sing  
Through whose heart in such an hour  
Beats no march of conscious power,  
Sweeps no tumult of elation!

'Tis no Man we celebrate,  
By his country's victories great,  
A hero half, and half the whim of Fate,  
But the pith and marrow of a Nation  
Drawing force from all her men,  
Highest, humblest, weakest, all,  
For her time of need, and then  
Pulsing it again through them,  
Till the basest can no longer cower,  
Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,  
Touched but in passing by her mantle-hem.  
Come back, then, noble pride, for 'tis her dower!  
How could poet ever tower,  
If his passions, hopes, and fears,  
If his triumphs and his tears,  
Kept not measure with his people?

Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds and waves!  
Clash out, glad bells, from every rocking steeple!  
Banners, advance with triumph, bend your staves!  
And from every mountain-peak  
Let beacon-fire to answering beacon speak,  
Katahdin tell Monadnock, Whiteface he,  
And so leap on in light from sea to sea,  
Till the glad news be sent  
Across a kindling continent,  
Making earth feel more firm and air breathe braver:  
' Be proud! for she is saved, and all have helped to save  
her!

She that lifts up the manhood of the poor,  
She of the open soul and open door,  
With room about her hearth for all mankind!  
The fire is dreadful in her eyes no more;

From her bold front the helm she doth unbind,  
Sends all her handmaid armies back to spin,  
And bids her navies, that so lately hurled  
Their crashing battle, hold their thunders in,  
Swimming like birds of calm along the unharmed  
shore.

No challenge sends she to the elder world,  
That looked askance and hated; a light scorn  
Plays o'er her mouth, as round her mighty knees  
She calls her children back, and waits the morn  
Of nobler day, enthroned between her subject seas.'

## XII

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found release!  
Thy God, in these distempered days,  
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,  
And through thine enemies hath wrought thy peace!

Bow down in prayer and praise!  
No poorest in thy borders but may now  
Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised brow.  
O Beautiful! my country! ours once more!  
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair  
O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,

And letting thy set lips,  
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,  
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,  
What words divine of lover or of poet  
Could tell our love and make thee know it,  
Among the Nations bright beyond compare?

What were our lives without thee?  
What all our lives to save thee?  
We reck not what we gave thee;  
We will not dare to doubt thee,  
But ask whatever else, and we will dare!

## SIDNEY LANIER

[1842-1881]

809

## THE MARSHES OF GLYNN

GLOOMS of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and woven  
With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven  
Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs,—  
    Emerald twilights,—  
    Virginal shy lights,  
Wrought of the leaves to allure to the whisper of vows,  
When lovers pace timidly down through the green colonnades  
Of the dim sweet woods, of the dear dark woods,  
    Of the heavenly woods and glades,  
That run to the radiant marginal sand-beach within  
    The wide sea-marshes of Glynn;—

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noonday fire,—  
Wildwood privacies, closets of lone desire,  
Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras of  
    leaves,—  
Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to the soul that  
    grieves,  
Pure with a sense of the passing of saints through the  
    wood,  
Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with good;—

O braided dusks of the oak and woven shades of the vine,  
While the riotous noon-day sun of the June day long did  
    shine  
Ye held me fast in your heart and I held you fast in mine;  
But now when the noon is no more, and riot is rest,  
And the sun is a-wait at the ponderous gate of the West,  
And the slant yellow beam down the wood-aisle doth seem  
Like a lane into heaven that leads from a dream,—  
Ay, now, when my soul all day hath drunken the soul of  
    the oak,



'And my heart is at ease from men, and the wearisome sound  
of the stroke

Of the scythe of time and the trowel of trade is low,  
And belief overmasters doubt, and I know that I know,  
And my spirit is grown to a lordly great compass within,  
That the length and the breadth and the sweep of the  
Marshes of Glynn

Will work me no fear like the fear they have wrought me  
of yore

When length was fatigue, and when breadth was but bitter-  
ness sore,

And when terror and shrinking and dreary unnamable pain  
Drew over me out of the merciless miles of the plain,—

Oh, now, unafraid, I am fain to face

The vast sweet visage of space.

To the edge of the wood I am drawn, I am drawn,  
Where the gray beach glimmering runs, as a belt of the  
dawn,

For a mete and a mark

To the forest-dark:—

So:

Affable live-oak, leaning low,—

Thus—with your favor—soft, with a reverent hand  
(Not lightly touching your person, Lord of the land!),

Bending your beauty aside, with a step I stand

On the firm-packed sand,

Free

By a world of marsh that borders a world of sea.

Sinuous southward and sinuous northward the shimmering  
band

Of the sand-beach fastens the fringe of the marsh to  
the folds of the land.

Inward and outward to northward and southward the beach-  
lines linger and curl

As a silver-wrought garment that clings to and follows the  
firm sweet limbs of a girl.

Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving again into sight,

Softly the sand-beach wavers away to a dim gray looping  
of light.

And what if behind me to westward the wall of the woods  
stands high?  
The world lies east: how ample, the marsh and the sea and  
the sky!  
A league and a league of marsh-grass, waist-high, broad in  
the blade,  
Green, and all of a height, and unflecked with a light or  
a shade,  
Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,  
To the terminal blue of the main.

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?  
Somehow my soul seems suddenly free  
From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin,  
By the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes  
of Glynn.

Ye marshes, how candid and simple and nothing-withholding  
and free  
Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer yourselves to  
the sea!  
Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the rains and the  
sun,  
Ye spread and span like the catholic man who hath mightily  
won  
God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain  
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,  
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God:  
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies  
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh  
and the skies:  
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod  
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:  
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within  
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.  
And the sea lends large, as the marsh: lo, out of his plenty  
the sea  
Pours fast: full soon the time of the flood-tide must be:

Look how the grace of the sea doth go  
About and about through the intricate channels that flow  
    Here and there,  
    Everywhere,  
Till his waters have flooded the uttermost creeks and the  
    low-lying lanes,  
And the marsh is meshed with a million veins,  
That like as with rosy and silvery essences flow  
    In the rose-and-silver evening glow.  
    Farewell, my lord Sun!  
The creeks overflow: a thousand rivulets run;  
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh-grass  
    stir;  
Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward  
    whirr;  
Passeth, and all is still; and the currents cease to run,  
And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!  
The tide is in his ecstasy.  
The tide is at his highest height:  
    And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of  
    sleep  
Roll in on the souls of men,  
But who will reveal to our waking ken  
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep  
    Under the waters of sleep?  
And I would I could know what swimmeth below when the  
    tide comes in  
On the length and the breadth of the marvellous marshes  
    of Glynn.

810

## THE REVENGE OF HAMISH

It was three slim does and a ten-tined buck in the bracken  
lay;

And all of a sudden the sinister smell of a man,  
Awft on a wind-shift, wavered and ran  
Down the hillside and sifted along through the bracken  
and passed that way.

Then Nan got a-tremble at nostril; she was the daintiest doe;  
In the print of her velvet flank on the velvet fern  
She reared, and rounded her ears in turn.  
Then the buck leapt up, and his head as a king's to a crown  
did go

Full high in the breeze, and he stood as if Death had the  
form of a deer;  
And the two slim does long lazily stretching arose,  
For their day-dream slower came to a close,  
Till they woke and were still, breath-bound with waiting  
and wonder and fear.

Then Alan the huntsman sprang over the hillock, the hounds  
shot by,  
The does and the ten-tined buck made a marvellous bound,  
The hounds swept after with never a sound,  
But Alan loud winded his horn in sign that the quarry was  
nigh.

For at dawn of that day proud Maclean of Lochbuy to the  
hunt had waxed wild,  
And he cursed at old Alan till Alan fared off with the  
hounds  
For to drive him the deer to the lower glen-grounds:  
'I will kill a red deer,' quoth Maclean, 'in the sight of the  
wife and the child.'

So gayly he paced with the wife and the child to his chosen stand;

But he hurried tall Hamish the henchman ahead: 'Go turn,'—

Cried Maclean,—'if the deer seek to cross to the burn,  
Do thou turn them to me: nor fail, lest thy back be red  
as thy hand.'

Now hard-fortuned Hamish, half blown of his breath with  
the height of the hill,

Was white in the face when the ten-tined buck and the  
does

Drew leaping to burn-ward; huskily rose  
His shouts, and his nether lip twitched, and his legs were  
o'er-weak for his will.

So the deer darted lightly by Hamish and bounded away to  
the burn.

But Maclean never bating his watch tarried waiting  
below;

Still Hamish hung heavy with fear for to go  
All the space of an hour, then he went, and his face was  
greenish and stern,

And his eye sat back in the socket, and shrunken the eye-  
balls shone,

As withdrawn from a vision of deeds it were shame to  
see.

'Now, now, grim henchman, what is 't with thee?'  
Brake Maclean, and his wrath rose red as a beacon the  
wind hath upblown.

'Three does and a ten-tined buck made out,' spoke Hamish,  
full mild,

'And I ran for to turn, but my breath it was blown, and  
they passed;

I was weak, for ye called ere I broke me my fast.'  
Cried Maclean: 'Now a ten-tined buck in the sight of the  
wife and the child

I had killed if the gluttonous kern had not wrought me a  
snail's own wrong!'

Then he sounded, and down came kinsmen and clansmen  
all:

'Ten blows, for ten tine, on his back let fall,  
And reckon no stroke if the blood follow not at the bite  
of thong!'

So Hamish made bare, and took him his strokes; at the last  
he smiled.

'Now I'll to the burn,' quoth Maclean, 'for it still  
may be,

If a slimmer-paunched henchman will hurry with me,  
I shall kill me the ten-tined buck for a gift to the wife and  
the child!'

Then the clansmen departed, by this path and that; and over  
the hill

Sped Maclean with an outward wrath for an inward  
shame;

And that place of the lashing full quiet became;  
And the wife and the child stood sad; and bloody-backed  
Hamish sat still.

But look! red Hamish has risen; quick about and about  
turns he.

'There is none betwixt me and the crag-top!' he screams  
under breath.

Then, livid as Lazarus lately from death,  
He snatches the child from the mother, and clambers the  
crag toward the sea.

Now the mother drops breath; she is dumb, and her heart  
goes dead for a space,

Till the motherhood, mistress of death, shrieks, shrieks  
through the glen,

And that place of the lashing is live with men,  
And Maclean, and the gillie that told him, dash up in a  
desperate race.

Not a breath's time for asking; an eye-glance reveals all  
the tale untold.

They follow mad Hamish afar up the crag toward the  
sea,

And the lady cries: 'Clansmen, run for a fee!

Yon castle and lands to the two first hands that shall hook  
him and hold

'Fast Hamish back from the brink!'—and ever she flies up  
the steep,

And the clansmen pant, and they sweat, and they jostle  
and strain.

But, mother, 'tis vain; but, father, 'tis vain;

Stern Hamish stands bold on the brink, and dangles the  
child o'er the deep.

Now a faintness falls on the men that run, and they all  
stand still.

And the wife prays Hamish as if he were God, on her  
knees,

Crying: 'Hamish! O Hamish! but please, but please  
For to spare him!' and Hamish still dangles the child, with  
a wavering will.

On a sudden he turns; with a sea-hawk scream, and a gibe,  
and a song,

Cries: 'So; I will spare ye the child if, in sight of  
ye all,

Ten blows on Maclean's bare back shall fall,  
And ye reckon no stroke if the blood follow not at the bite  
of the thong!'

Then Maclean he set hardly his tooth to his lip that his tooth  
was red,

Breathed short for a space, said: 'Nay, but it never shall  
be!

Let me hurl off the damnable hound in the sea!'

But the wife: 'Can Hamish go fish us the child from the sea,  
if dead?

‘Say yea!—Let them lash *me*, Hamish?’—‘Nay!’—‘Husband, the lashing will heal;

But, oh, who will heal me the bonny sweet bairn in his grave?

Could ye cure me my heart with the death of a knave?  
Quick! Love! I will bare thee—so— kneel!’ Then Maclean  
’gan slowly to kneel

With never a word, till presently downward he jerked to the earth.

Then the henchman—he that smote Hamish—would tremble and lag;

‘Strike, hard!’ quoth Hamish, full stern, from the crag;  
Then he struck him, and ‘One!’ sang Hamish, and danced with the child in his mirth.

And no man spake beside Hamish; he counted each stroke with a song.

When the last stroke fell, then he moved him a pace down the height,

And he held forth the child in the heart-aching sight  
Of the mother, and looked all pitiful grave, as repenting a wrong.

And there as the motherly arms stretched out with the thanksgiving prayer—

And there as the mother crept up with a fearful swift pace,

Till her finger nigh felt of the bairnie’s face—

In a flash fierce Hamish turned round and lifted the child in the air,

And sprang with the child in his arms from the horrible height in the sea,

Shrill screeching, ‘Revenge!’ in the wind-rush; and pallid Maclean,

Age-feeble with anger and impotent pain,

Crawled up on the crag, and lay flat, and locked hold of dead roots of a tree,



And gazed hungrily o'er, and the blood from his back drip-  
dripped in the brine,  
And a sea-hawk flung down a skeleton fish as he flew,  
And the mother stared white on the waste of blue,  
And the wind drove a cloud to seaward, and the sun began  
to shine.

811

## HOW LOVE LOOKED FOR HELL

To heal his heart of long-time pain  
One day Prince Love for to travel was fain  
With Ministers Mind and Sense.  
'Now what to thee most strange may be?'  
Quoth Mind and Sense. 'All things above,  
One curious thing I first would see—  
Hell,' quoth Love.

Then Mind rode in and Sense rode out:  
They searched the ways of man about.  
First frightfully groaneth Sense.  
''Tis here, 'tis here,' and spurreth in fear  
To the top of the hill that hangeth above  
And plucketh the Prince: 'Come, come, 'tis  
here—'  
'Where?' quoth Love—

'Not far, not far,' said shivering Sense  
As they rode on. 'A short way hence,  
—But seventy paces hence:  
Look, King, dost see where suddenly  
This road doth dip from the height above?  
Cold blew a mouldy wind by me'  
( 'Cold?' quoth Love)

'As I rode down, and the River was black,  
And yon-side, lo! an endless wrack  
And rabble of souls,' sighed Sense,

'Their eyes upturned and begged and  
 burned  
 In brimstone lakes, and a Hand above  
 Beat back the hands that upward yearned—'  
 'Nay!' quoth Love—

'Yea, yea, sweet Prince; thyself shalt see,  
 Wilt thou but down this slope with me;  
     'Tis palpable,' whispered Sense.  
 At the foot of the hill a living rill  
 Shone, and the lilies shone white above;  
 'But now 'twas black, 'twas a river, this  
     rill,'  
 ('Black?' quoth Love)

'Ay, black, but lo! the lilies grow,  
 And yon-side where was woe, was woe,—  
     Where the rabble of souls,' cried Sense,  
 'Did shrivel and turn and beg and burn,  
 Thrust back in the brimstone from above—  
 Is banked of violet, rose, and fern:'  
 'How?' quoth Love:

'For lakes of pain, yon pleasant plain  
 Of woods and grass and yellow grain  
     Doth ravish the soul and sense:  
 And never a sigh beneath the sky,  
 And folk that smile and gaze above—'  
 'But saw'st thou here, with thine own eye,  
     Hell?' quoth Love.

'I saw true hell with mine own eye,  
 True hell, or light hath told a lie,  
     True, verily,' quoth stout Sense.  
 Then Love rode round and searched the  
     ground,  
 The caves below, the hills above;  
 'But I cannot find where thou hast found  
     Hell,' quoth Love.

There, while they stood in a green wood  
And marvelled still on Ill and Good,  
Came suddenly Minister Mind.  
'In the heart of sin doth hell begin:  
'Tis not below, 'tis not above,  
It lieth within, it lieth within:'  
( 'Where?' quoth Love)

'I saw a man sit by a corse;  
*Hell's in the murderer's breast: remorse!*  
Thus clamored his mind to his mind:  
Not fleshly dole is the sinner's goal,  
Hell's not below, nor yet above,  
'Tis fixed in the ever-damned soul—'  
'Fixed?' quoth Love—

'Fixed: follow me, would'st thou but see:  
He weepeth under yon willow tree,  
Fast chained to his corse,' quoth Mind.  
Full soon they passed, for they rode fast,  
Where the piteous willow bent above.  
'Now shall I see at last, at last,  
Hell,' quoth Love.

There when they came Mind suffered  
shame:  
'These be the same and not the same,'  
A-wondering whispered Mind.  
Lo, face by face two spirits pace  
Where the blissful willow waves above:  
One saith: 'Do me a friendly grace—'  
( 'Grace!' quoth Love)

'Read me two Dreams that linger long,  
Dim as returns of old-time song  
That flicker about the mind.  
I dreamed (how deep in mortal sleep!)  
I struck thee dead, then stood above,  
With tears that none but dreamers weep;  
'Dreams,' quoth Love;

'In dreams, again, I plucked a flower  
 That clung with pain and stung with power,  
     Yea, nettled me, body and mind.'  
 "'Twas the nettle of sin, 'twas medicine;  
 No need nor seed of it here Above;  
 In dreams of hate true loves begin.'  
     'True,' quoth Love.

'Now strange,' quoth Sense, and 'Strange,'  
     quoth Mind,  
 'We saw it, and yet 'tis hard to find,  
     —But we saw it,' quoth Sense and Mind.  
 Stretched on the ground, beautiful-crowned  
 Of the piteous willow that wreathed above,  
 'But I cannot find where ye have found  
     Hell,' quoth Love.

## BRET HARTE

[1839-1902]

## THE REVEILLE

HARK! I hear the tramp of thousands,  
 And of armed men the hum;  
 Lo! a nation's hosts have gathered  
 Round the quick alarming drum,—  
     Saying, 'Come,  
     Freemen, come!  
 Ere your heritage be wasted,' said the quick alarming drum.

Let me of my heart take counsel:  
 War is not of life the sum;  
 Who shall stay and reap the harvest  
 When the autumn days shall come?  
     But the drum  
     Echoed, 'Come!  
 Death shall reap the braver harvest,' said the solemn-sounding drum.

'But when won the coming battle,  
 What of profit springs therefrom?  
 What if conquest, subjugation,  
 Even greater ills become?'

But the drum  
 Answered, 'Come!

You must do the sum to prove it,' said the Yankee-answering  
 drum.

'What if, 'mid cannons' thunder,  
 Whistling shot and bursting bomb,  
 When my brothers fall around me,  
 Should my heart grow cold and numb?'

But the drum  
 Answered, 'Come!

Better there in death united, than in life a recreant,—Come!"

Thus they answered,—hoping, fearing,  
 Some in faith, and doubting some,  
 Till a trumpet-voice proclaiming,  
 Said, 'My chosen people, come!'

Then the drum,  
 Lo! was dumb.

For the great heart of the nation, throbbing, answered,  
 'Lord, we come!'

## WALT WHITMAN

[1819-1892]

813

## ONE'S-SELF I SING

ONE'S-SELF I sing, a simple separate person,  
 Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse.

Of physiology from top to toe I sing,  
 Not physiognomy alone nor brain alone is worthy for the  
 Muse—I say the Form complete is worthier far,  
 The Female equally with the Male I sing.

Of Life immense in passion, pulse, and power,  
Cheerful, for freest action form'd under the laws divine,  
The Modern Man I sing.

814

## BEAT! BEAT! DRUMS!

BEAT! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!  
Through the windows—through doors—burst like a ruthless  
force,  
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation,  
Into the school where the scholar is studying;  
Leave not the bridegroom quiet—no happiness must he have  
now with his bride,  
Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, ploughing his field or  
gathering his grain,  
So fierce you whirr and pound you drums—so shrill you  
bugles blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!  
Over the traffic of cities—over the rumble of wheels in the  
streets;  
Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses? no  
sleepers must sleep in those beds,  
No bargainers' bargains by day—no brokers or speculators—  
would they continue?  
Would the talkers be talking? would the singer attempt to  
sing?  
Would the lawyer rise in the court to state his case before  
the judge?  
Then rattle quicker, heavier drums—you bugles wilder blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!  
Make no parley—stop for no expostulation,  
Mind not the timid—mind not the weeper or prayer,  
Mind not the old man beseeching the young man,  
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties,  
Make even the trestles to shake the dead where they lie  
awaiting the hearses,  
So strong you thump O terrible drums—so loud you bugles  
blow.

## 815 VIGIL STRANGE I KEPT ON THE FIELD ONE NIGHT

VIGIL strange I kept on the field one night;  
When you my son and my comrade dropt at my side that day,  
One look I but gave which your dear eyes return'd with a  
    look I shall never forget,  
One touch of your hand to mine O boy, reach'd up as you  
    lay on the ground,  
Then onward I sped in the battle, the even-contested battle,  
Till late in the night reliev'd to the place at last again I made  
    my way,  
Found you in death so cold dear comrade, found your body  
    son of responding kisses (never again on earth re-  
    sponding),  
Bared your face in the starlight, curious the scene, cool blew  
    the moderate night-wind,  
Long there and then in vigil I stood, dimly around me the  
    battle-field spreading,  
Vigil wondrous and vigil sweet there in the fragrant silent  
    night,  
But not a tear fell, not even a long-drawn sigh, long, long I  
    gazed.  
Then on the earth partially reclining sat by your side leaning  
    my chin in my hands,  
Passing sweet hours, immortal and mystic hours with you  
    dearest comrade—not a tear, not a word.  
Vigil of silence, love and death, vigil for you my son and my  
    soldier,  
As onward silently stars aloft, eastward new ones upward  
    stole,  
Vigil final for you brave boy, (I could not save you, swift  
    was your death,  
I faithfully loved you and cared for you living, I think we  
    shall surely meet again,)  
Till at latest lingering of the night, indeed just as the dawn  
    appear'd,  
My comrade I wrapt in his blanket, envelop'd well his form,  
Folded the blanket well, tucking it carefully over head and  
    carefully under feet,

And there and then and bathed by the rising sun, my son in  
his grave, in his rude-dug grave I deposited,  
Ending my vigil strange with that, vigil of night and battle-  
field dim,  
Vigil for boy of responding kisses (never again on earth  
responding),  
Vigil for comrade swiftly slain, vigil I never forget, how as  
day brighten'd,  
I rose from the chill ground and folded my soldier well in  
his blanket,  
And buried him where he fell.

816

## PIONEERS! O PIONEERS!

COME my tan-faced children,  
Follow well in order, get your weapons ready,  
Have you your pistols? have you your sharp-edged axes?  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

For we cannot tarry here,  
We must march my darlings, we must bear the brunt of  
danger,  
We the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O you youths, Western youths,  
So impatient, full of action, full of manly pride and friend-  
ship,  
Plain I see you Western youths, see you tramping with the  
foremost,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Have the elder races halted?  
Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied over there  
beyond the seas?  
We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!



All the past we leave behind,  
We debouch upon a newer mightier world, varied world,  
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the  
march,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

We detachments steady throwing,  
Down the edges, through the passes, up the mountains steep,  
Conquering, holding, daring, venturing as we go the un-  
known ways,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

We primeval forests felling,  
We the rivers stemming, vexing we and piercing deep the  
mines within,  
We the surface broad surveying, we the virgin soil upheav-  
ing,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Colorado men are we,  
From the peaks gigantic, from the great sierras and the  
high plateaus,  
From the mine and from the gully, from the hunting trail  
we come,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

From Nebraska, from Arkansas,  
Central inland race are we, from Missouri, with the con-  
tinental blood intervein'd,  
All the hands of comrades clasping, all the Southern, all the  
Northern,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O resistless restless race!  
O beloved race in all! O my breast aches with tender love for  
all!  
O I mourn and yet exult, I am rapt with love for all,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Raise the mighty mother mistress,  
Waving high the delicate mistress, over all the starry mistress  
(bend your heads all),  
Raise the fang'd and warlike mistress, stern, impassive,  
weapon'd mistress,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

See my children, resolute children,  
By those swarms upon our rear we must never yield or  
falter,  
Ages back in ghostly millions frowning there behind us  
urging,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

On and on the compact ranks,  
With accessions ever waiting, with the places of the dead  
quickly fill'd,  
Through the battle, through defeat, moving yet and never  
stopping,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O to die advancing on!  
Are there some of us to droop and die? has the hour come?  
Then upon the march we fittest die, soon and sure the gap  
is fill'd,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the pulses of the world,  
Falling in they beat for us, with the Western movement  
beat,  
Holding single or together, steady moving to the front,  
all for us,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Life's involv'd and varied pageants,  
All the forms and shows, all the workmen at their work,  
All the seamen and the landsmen, all the masters with their  
slaves,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the hapless silent lovers,  
All the prisoners in the prisons, all the righteous and the  
wicked,  
All the joyous, all the sorrowing, all the living, all the dying,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

I too with my soul and body,  
We, a curious trio, picking, wandering on our way,  
Through these shores amid the shadows, with the apparitions  
pressing,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Lo, the darting bowling orb!  
Lo, the brother orbs around, all the clustering suns and  
planets,  
All the dazzling days, all the mystic nights with dreams,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

These are of us, they are with us,  
All for primal needed work, while the followers there in  
embryo wait behind,  
We to-day's procession heading, we the route for travel  
clearing,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O you daughters of the West!  
O you young and elder daughters! O you mothers and you  
wives!  
Never must you be divided, in our ranks you move united,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Minstrels latent on the prairies!  
(Shrouded bards of other lands, you may rest, you have done  
your work,)  
Soon I hear you coming warbling, soon you rise and tramp  
amid us,  
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Not for delectations sweet,  
Not the cushion and the slipper, not the peaceful and the  
studious,

Not the riches safe and palling, not for us the tame enjoyment,  
     Pioneers! O pioneers!

Do the feasters gluttonous feast?  
 Do the corpulent sleepers sleep? have they lock'd and bolted doors?  
 Still be ours the diet hard, and the blanket on the ground,  
     Pioneers! O pioneers!

Has the night descended?  
 Was the road of late so toilsome? did we stop discouraged nodding on our way?  
 Yet a passing hour I yield you in your tracks to pause oblivious,  
     Pioneers! O pioneers!

Till with sound of trumpet,  
 Far, far off the daybreak call—hark! how loud and clear I hear it wind,  
 Swift! to the head of the army!—swift! spring to your places,  
     Pioneers! O pioneers!

817

## ETHIOPIA SALUTING THE COLORS

Who are you dusky woman, so ancient hardly human,  
 With your woolly-white and turban'd head, and bare bony feet?  
 Why rising by the roadside here, do you the colors greet?

('Tis while our army lines Carolina's sands and pines,  
 Forth from thy hovel door thou Ethiopia com'st to me,  
 As under doughty Sherman I march toward the sea.)

*Me master years a hundred since from my parents sunder'd,  
 A little child, they caught me as the savage beast is caught,  
 Then hither me across the sea the cruel slaver brought.*

No further does she say, but lingering all the day,  
Her high-borne turban'd head she wags, and rolls her dark-  
ling eye,  
And courtesies to the regiments, the guidons moving by.

What is it fateful woman, so blear, hardly human?  
Why wag your head with turban bound, yellow, red and  
green?  
Are the things so strange and marvelous you see or have  
seen?

818

## THE WOUND-DRESSER

## I

AN old man bending I come among new faces,  
Years looking backward resuming in answer to children,  
Come tell us old man, as from young men and maidens that  
love me,  
(Arous'd and angry, I'd thought to beat the alarum, and  
urge relentless war,  
But soon my fingers fail'd me, my face droop'd and I  
resign'd myself,  
To sit by the wounded and soothe them, or silently watch  
the dead;)  
Years hence of these scenes, of these furious passions,  
these chances,  
Of unsurpass'd heroes (was one side so brave? the other was  
equally brave;)  
Now be witness again, paint the mightiest armies of earth,  
Of those armies so rapid so wondrous what saw you to tell  
us?  
What stays with you latest and deepest? of curious panics,  
Of hard-fought engagements or sieges tremendous what  
deepest remains?

## 2

O maidens and young men I love and that love me,  
What you ask of my days those the strangest and sudden  
your talking recalls,

Soldier alert I arrive after a long march cover'd with sweat  
and dust,  
In the nick of time I come, plunge in the fight, loudly shout  
in the rush of successful charge,  
Enter the captur'd works—yet lo, like a swift-running river  
they fade,  
I pass and are gone they fade—I dwell not on soldiers' perils  
or soldiers' joys  
(Both I remember well—many the hardships, few the joys,  
yet I was content).

But in silence, in dreams' projections,  
While the world of gain and appearance and mirth goes on,  
So soon what is over forgotten, and waves wash the im-  
prints off the sand,  
With hinged knees returning I enter the doors (while for  
you up there,  
Whoever you are, follow without noise and be of strong  
heart).

Bearing the bandages, water and sponge,  
Straight and swift to my wounded I go,  
Where they lie on the ground after the battle brought in,  
Where their priceless blood reddens the grass, the ground,  
Or to the rows of the hospital tent, or under the roof'd  
hospital,  
To the long rows of cots up and down each side I return,  
To each and all one after another I draw near, not one do  
I miss,  
An attendant follows holding a tray, he carries a refuse pail,  
Soon to be fill'd with clotted rags and blood, emptied, and  
fill'd again.

I onward go, I stop,  
With hinged knees and steady hand to dress wounds,  
I am firm with each, the pangs are sharp yet unavoidable,  
One turns to me his appealing eyes—poor boy! I never knew  
you,  
Yet I think I could not refuse this moment to die for you,  
if that would save you.

## 3

On, on I go, (open doors of time! open hospital doors!)  
The crush'd head I dress (poor crazed hand tear not the  
bandage away),  
The neck of the cavalry-man with the bullet through and  
through I examine,  
Hard the breathing rattles, quite glazed already the eye, yet  
life struggles hard  
(Come sweet death! be persuaded O beautiful death!  
In mercy come quickly).

From the stump of the arm, the amputated hand,  
I undo the clotted lint, remove the slough, wash off the  
matter and blood,  
Back on his pillow the soldier bends with curv'd neck and  
side-falling head,  
His eyes are closed, his face is pale, he dares not look on  
the bloody stump,  
And has not yet look'd on it.

I dress a wound in the side, deep, deep,  
But a day or two more, for see the frame all wasted and  
sinking,  
And the yellow-blue countenance see.

I dress the perforated shoulder, the foot with the bullet-  
wound,  
Cleanse the one with a gnawing and putrid gangrene, so  
sickening, so offensive,  
While the attendant stands behind aside me holding the  
tray and pail.

I am faithful, I do not give out,  
The fractur'd thigh, the knee, the wound in the abdomen,  
These and more I dress with impassive hand (yet deep in  
my breast a fire, a burning flame).

## 4

Thus in silence in dreams' projections,  
Returning, resuming, I thread my way through the hospitals,  
The hurt and wounded I pacify with soothing hand,  
I sit by the restless all the dark night, some are so young,  
Some suffer so much, I recall the experience sweet and sad,  
(Many a soldier's loving arms about this neck have cross'd  
and rested,  
Many a soldier's kiss dwells on these bearded lips).

819

## GIVE ME THE SPLENDID SILENT SUN

## I

GIVE me the splendid silent sun with all his beams full-  
dazzling,  
Give me juicy autumnal fruit ripe and red from the orchard,  
Give me a field where the unmow'd grass grows,  
Give me an arbor, give me the trellis'd grape,  
Give me fresh corn and wheat, give me serene-moving ani-  
mals teaching content,  
Give me nights perfectly quiet as on high plateaus west of  
the Mississippi, and I looking up at the stars,  
Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers  
where I can walk undisturb'd,  
Give me for marriage a sweet-breath'd woman of whom I  
should never tire,  
Give me a perfect child, give me away aside from the noise  
of the world a rural domestic life,  
Give me to warble spontaneous songs recluse by myself, for  
my own ears only,  
Give me solitude, give me Nature, give me again O Nature  
your primal sanities!

These demanding to have them (tired with ceaseless excite-  
ment, and rack'd by the war-strife),  
These to procure incessantly asking, rising in cries from my  
heart,



While yet incessantly asking still I adhere to my city,  
Day upon day and year upon year O city, walking your  
streets,  
Where you hold me enchain'd a certain time refusing to  
give me up,  
Yet giving to make me glutt'd, enrich'd of soul, you give  
me forever faces;  
(Oh I see what I sought to escape, confronting, reversing  
my cries,  
I see my own soul trampling down what it ask'd for.)

## 2

Keep your splendid silent sun,  
Keep your woods O Nature, and the quiet places by the  
woods,  
Keep your fields of clover and timothy, and your corn-fields  
and orchards,  
Keep the blossoming buckwheat fields where the Ninth-month  
bees hum;  
Give me faces and streets—give me these phantoms inces-  
sant and endless along the trottoirs!  
Give me interminable eyes—give me women—give me com-  
rades and lovers by the thousand!  
Let me see new ones every day—let me hold new ones by  
the hand every day!  
Give me such shows—give me the streets of Manhattan!  
Give me Broadway, with the soldiers marching—give me the  
sound of the trumpets and drums!  
(The soldiers in companies or regiments—some starting  
away, flush'd and reckless,  
Some, their time up, returning with thinn'd ranks, young,  
yet very old, worn, marching, noticing nothing;)  
Give me the shores and wharves heavy-fringed with black  
ships!  
O such for me! O an intense life, full to repletion and  
varied!  
The life of the theatre, bar-room, huge hotel, for me!  
The saloon of the steamer! the crowded excursion for me!  
the torchlight procession!

The dense brigade bound for the war, with high piled  
military wagons following;  
People, endless, streaming, with strong voices, passions,  
pageants,  
Manhattan streets with their powerful throbs, with beating  
drums as now,  
The endless and noisy chorus, the rustle and clank of mus-  
kets (even the sight of the wounded),  
Manhattan crowds, with their turbulent musical chorus!  
Manhattan faces and eyes forever for me.

820

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

O CAPTAIN! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,  
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is  
won,  
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and  
daring;  
But O heart! heart! heart!  
O the bleeding drops of red,  
Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,  
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores  
a-crowding,  
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces  
turning;  
Here Captain! dear father!  
This arm beneath your head!  
It is some dream that on the deck,  
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,  
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,  
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and  
done,  
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;

Exult O shores, and ring O bells!  
But I with mournful tread,  
Walk the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

821 WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE DOORYARD BLOOM'D

I

WHEN lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd,  
And the great star early droop'd in the western sky in the  
night,  
I mourn'd, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.  
Ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,  
Lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,  
And thought of him I love.

2

O powerful western fallen star!  
O shades of night—O moody, tearful night!  
O great star disappear'd—O the black murk that hides the  
star!  
O cruel hands that hold me powerless—O helpless soul of  
me!  
O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul.

3

In the dooryard fronting an old farm-house near the white-  
wash'd palings,  
Stands the lilac-bush tall-growing with heart-shaped leaves  
of rich green,  
With many a pointed blossom rising delicate, with the per-  
fume strong I love,  
With every leaf a miracle—and from this bush in the door-  
yard,  
With delicate-color'd blossoms and heart-shaped leaves of  
rich green,  
A sprig with its flower I break.

## 4

In the swamp in secluded recesses,  
A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.

Solitary the thrush,  
The hermit withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,  
Sings by himself a song.

Song of the bleeding throat,  
Death's outlet song of life (for well dear brother I know,  
If thou wast not granted to sing thou would'st surely die).

## 5

Over the breast of the spring, the land, amid cities,  
Amid lanes and through old woods, where lately the violets  
    peep'd from the ground, spotting the gray debris,  
Amid the grass in the fields each side of the lanes, passing  
    the endless grass,  
Passing the yellow-spear'd wheat, every grain from its  
    shroud in the dark-brown fields uprisen,  
Passing the apple-tree blows of white and pink in the  
    orchards,  
Carrying a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,  
Night and day journeys a coffin.

## 6

Coffin that passes through lanes and streets,  
Through day and night with the great cloud darkening the  
    land,  
With the pomp of the inloop'd flags with the cities draped  
    in black,  
With the show of the States themselves as of crape-veil'd  
    women standing,  
With processions long and winding and the flambeaus of the  
    night,  
With the countless torches lit, with the silent sea of faces  
    and the unbared heads,

With the waiting depot, the arriving coffin, and the sombre  
faces,  
With dirges through the night, with the thousand voices  
rising strong and solemn,  
With all the mournful voices of the dirges pour'd around  
the coffin,  
The dim-lit churches and the shuddering organs—where  
amid these you journey,  
With the tolling tolling bells' perpetual clang,  
Here, coffin that slowly passes,  
I give you my sprig of lilac.

## 7

(Nor for you, for one alone,  
Blossoms and branches green to coffins all I bring,  
For fresh as the morning, thus would I chant a song for you  
O sane and sacred death.

**All over bouquets of roses,**  
O death, I cover you over with roses and early lilies,  
But mostly and now the lilac that blooms the first,  
Copious I break, I break the sprigs from the bushes,  
With loaded arms I come, pouring for you,  
For you and the coffins all of you O death.)

## 8

O western orb sailing the heaven,  
Now I know what you must have meant as a month since  
I walk'd,  
As I walk'd in silence the transparent shadowy night,  
As I saw you had something to tell as you bent to me night  
after night,  
As you droop'd from the sky low down as if to my side  
(while the other stars all look'd on),  
As we wander'd together the solemn night (for something I  
know not what kept me from sleep),  
As the night advanced, and I saw on the rim of the west  
how full you were of woe,

As I stood on the rising ground in the breeze in the cool  
transparent night,  
As I watch'd where you pass'd and was lost in the nether-  
ward black of the night,  
As my soul in its trouble dissatisfied sank, as where you  
sad orb,  
Concluded, dropt in the night, and was gone.

## 9

Sing on there in the swamp,  
O singer bashful and tender, I hear your notes, I hear your  
call,  
I hear, I come presently, I understand you,  
But a moment I linger, for the lustrous star has detain'd me,  
The star my departing comrade holds and detains me.

## 10

O how shall I warble myself for the dead one there I loved?  
And how shall I deck my song for the large sweet soul that  
has gone?  
And what shall my perfume be for the grave of him I love?

Sea-winds blown from east and west,  
Blown from the Eastern sea and blown from the Western  
sea, till there on the prairies meeting,  
These and with these and the breath of my chant,  
I'll perfume the grave of him I love.

## 11

O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?  
And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,  
To adorn the burial-house of him I love?

Pictures of growing spring and farms and homes,  
With the Fourth-month eve at sundown, and the gray smoke  
lucid and bright,

With floods of the yellow gold of the gorgeous, indolent,  
sinking sun, burning, expanding the air,  
With the fresh sweet herbage under foot, and the pale green  
leaves of the trees prolific,  
In the distance the flowing glaze, the breast of the river,  
with a wind-dapple here and there,  
With ranging hills on the banks, with many a line against  
the sky, and shadows,  
And the city at hand with dwellings so dense, and stacks  
of chimneys,  
And all the scenes of life and the workshops, and the work-  
men homeward returning.

## 12

Lo, body and soul—this land,  
My own Manhattan with spires, and the sparkling and hur-  
rying tides, and the ships,  
The varied and ample land, the South and the North in the  
light, Ohio's shores and flashing Missouri,  
And ever the far-spreading prairies cover'd with grass and  
corn.

Lo, the most excellent sun so calm and haughty,  
The violet and purple morn with just-felt breezes,  
The gentle soft-born measureless light,  
The miracle spreading bathing all, the fulfill'd noon,  
The coming eve delicious, the welcome night and the  
stars,  
Over my cities shining all, enveloping man and land.

## 13

Sing on, sing on you gray-brown bird,  
Sing from the swamps, the recesses, pour your chant from  
the bushes,  
Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.  
Sing on dearest brother, warble your reedy song,  
Loud human song, with voice of uttermost woe.



O liquid and free and tender!  
O wild and loose to my soul—O wondrous singer!  
You only I hear—yet the star holds me (but will soon  
depart),  
Yet the lilac with mastering odor holds me.

## 14

Now while I sat in the day and look'd forth,  
In the close of the day with its light and the fields of spring,  
and the farmers preparing their crops,  
In the large unconscious scenery of my land with its lakes  
and forests,  
In the heavenly aerial beauty (after the perturb'd winds  
and the storms),  
Under the arching heavens of the afternoon swift passing,  
and the voices of children and women,  
The many-moving sea-tides, and I saw the ships how they  
sail'd,  
And the summer approaching with richness, and the fields  
all busy with labor,  
And the infinite separate houses, how they all went on, each  
with its meals and minutia of daily usages,  
And the streets how their throbbings throb'd, and the cities  
pent—lo, then and there,  
Falling upon them all and among them all, enveloping me  
with the rest,  
Appear'd the cloud, appear'd the long black trail,  
And I knew death, its thought, and the sacred knowledge  
of death.

Then with the knowledge of death as walking one side  
of me,  
And the thought of death close-walking the other side of me,  
And I in the middle as with companions, and as holding the  
hands of companions,  
I fled forth to the hiding receiving night that talks not,  
Down to the shores of the water, the path by the swamp in  
the dimness,



To the solemn shadowy cedars and ghostly pines so still,  
And the singer so shy to the rest receiv'd me,  
The gray-brown bird I know receiv'd us comrades three,  
And he sang the carol of death, and a verse for him I love.

From deep secluded recesses,  
From the fragrant cedars and the ghostly pines so still,  
Came the carol of the bird.

And the charm of the carol rapt me,  
As I held as if by their hands my comrades in the night,  
And the voice of my spirit tallied the song of the bird.

*Come lovely and soothing death,  
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,  
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,  
Sooner or later delicate death.*

*Prais'd be the fathomless universe,  
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,  
And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!  
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.*

*Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,  
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?  
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,  
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come  
unfalteringly.*

*Approach strong deliveress,  
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing  
the dead,  
Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,  
Laved in the flood of thy bliss O death.*

*From me to thee glad serenades,  
Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, adornments and  
feastings for thee,  
And the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread  
sky are fitting,  
And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.*

*The night in silence under many a star,  
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice  
I know,  
And the soul turning to thee O vast and well-veil'd death,  
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.*

*Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,  
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields  
and the prairies wide,  
Over the dense-pack'd cities all and the teeming wharves  
and ways,  
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee O death.*

## 15

To the tally of my soul,  
Loud and strong kept up the gray-brown bird,  
With pure deliberate notes spreading filling the night.

Loud in the pines and cedars dim,  
Clear in the freshness moist and the swamp perfume,  
And I with my comrades there in the night.

While my sight that was bound in my eyes unclosed,  
As to long panoramas of visions.

And I saw askant the armies,  
I saw as in noiseless dreams hundreds of battle-flags,  
Borne through the smoke of the battles and pierc'd with  
missiles I saw them,  
And carried hither and yon through the smoke, and torn and  
bloody,  
And at last but a few shreds left on the staffs (and all in  
silence),  
And the staffs all splinter'd and broken.

I saw battle-corpses, myriads of them,  
And the white skeletons of young men, I saw them,  
I saw the débris and débris of all the slain soldiers of the  
war,

But I saw they were not as was thought,  
They themselves were fully at rest, they suffer'd not,  
The living remain'd and suffer'd, the mother suffer'd,  
And the wife and the child and the musing comrade suffer'd,  
And the armies that remain'd suffer'd.

## 16

Passing the visions, passing the night,  
Passing, unloosing the hold of my comrades' hands,  
Passing the song of the hermit bird and the tallying song  
    of my soul,  
Victorious song, death's outlet song, yet varying ever-alter-  
    ing song,  
As low and wailing, yet clear the notes, rising and falling,  
    flooding the night,  
Sadly sinking and fainting, as warning and warning, and  
    yet again bursting with joy,  
Covering the earth and filling the spread of the heaven,  
As that powerful psalm in the night I heard from recesses,  
Passing, I leave thee lilac with heart-shaped leaves,  
I leave thee there in the door-yard, blooming, returning with  
    spring.

I cease from my song for thee,  
From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west, com-  
    muning with thee,  
O comrade lustrous with silver face in the night.

Yet each to keep and all, retrievements out of the night,  
The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird,  
And the tallying chant, the echo arous'd in my soul,  
With the lustrous and drooping star with the countenance  
    full of woe,  
With the holders holding my hand nearing the call of the bird,  
Comrades mine and I in the midst, and their memory ever  
    to keep, for the dead I loved so well,  
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—  
    and this for his dear sake,  
Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,  
There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim

822

## PRAYER OF COLUMBUS

A BATTER'D, wreck'd old man  
Thrown on this savage shore, far, far from home,  
Pent by the sea and dark rebellious brows, twelve dreary  
months,  
Sore, stiff with many toils, sicken'd and nigh to death,  
I take my way along the island's edge,  
Venting a heavy heart.

I am too full of woe!  
Haply I may not live another day;  
I cannot rest O God, I cannot eat or drink or sleep,  
Till I put forth myself, my prayer, once more to Thee,  
Breathe, bathe myself once more in Thee, commune with  
Thee,  
Report myself once more to Thee.

Thou knowest my years entire, my life,  
My long and crowded life of active work, not adoration  
merely;  
Thou knowest the prayers and vigils of my youth,  
Thou knowest my manhood's solemn and visionary medi-  
tations,  
Thou knowest how before I commenced I devoted all to  
come to Thee,  
Thou knowest I have in age ratified all those vows and  
strictly kept them,  
Thou knowest I have not once lost nor faith nor ecstasy  
in Thee,  
In shackles, prison'd, in disgrace, repining not,  
Accepting all from Thee, as duly come from Thee.

All my emprises have been fill'd with Thee,  
My speculations, plans, begun and carried on in thoughts of  
Thee,  
Sailing the deep or journeying the land for Thee;  
Intentions, purports, aspirations mine, leaving results to Thee.

O I am sure they really came from Thee,  
The urge, the ardor, the unconquerable will,  
The potent, felt, interior command, stronger than words,  
A message from the Heavens whispering to me even in  
sleep,  
These sped me on.

By me and these the work so far accomplish'd,  
By me earth's elder cloy'd and stifled lands uncloy'd, un-  
loos'd,  
By me the hemispheres rounded and tied, the unknown to  
the known.

The end I know not, it is all in Thee,  
Or small or great I know not—haply what broad fields,  
what lands,  
Haply the brutish measureless human undergrowth I know,  
Transplanted there may rise to stature, knowledge worthy  
Thee,  
Haply the swords I know may there indeed be turn'd to  
reaping-tools,  
Haply the lifeless cross I know, Europe's dead cross, may  
bud and blossom there.

One effort more, my altar this bleak sand;  
That Thou O God my life hast lighted,  
With ray of light, steady, ineffable, vouchsafed of Thee,  
Light rare untellable, lighting the very light,  
Beyond all signs, descriptions, languages;  
For that O God, be it my latest word, here on my knees,  
Old, poor, and paralyzed, I thank Thee.

My terminus near,  
The clouds already closing in upon me,  
The voyage balk'd, the course disputed, lost,  
I yield my ships to Thee.

My hands, my limbs grow nerveless,  
My brain feels rack'd, bewilder'd,  
Let the old timbers part, I will not part,

I will cling fast to Thee, O God, though the waves buffet me,  
Thee, Thee at least I know.

Is it the prophet's thought I speak, or am I raving?  
What do I know of life? what of myself?  
I know not even my own work past or present,  
Dim ever-shifting guesses of it spread before me,  
Of newer better worlds, their mighty parturition,  
Mocking, perplexing me.

And these things I see suddenly, what mean they?  
As if some miracle, some hand divine unseal'd my eyes,  
Shadowy vast shapes smile through the air and sky,  
And on the distant waves sail countless ships,  
And anthems in new tongues I hear saluting me.

## 823

## THE LAST INVOCATION

At the last, tenderly,  
From the walls of the powerful fortress'd house,  
From the clasp of the knitted locks, from the keep of the  
    well-closed doors,  
Let me be wafted.

Let me glide noiselessly forth;  
With the key of softness unlock the locks—with a whisper,  
Set ope the doors O soul.

Tenderly—be not impatient,  
(Strong is your hold O mortal flesh,  
Strong is your hold O love.)





